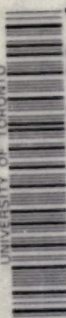


MANIN & THE DEFENCE OF VENICE

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



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LONDON: SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, & CO.

MANIN
AND
THE DEFENCE OF VENICE

BY
JOHN PRESLAND, pseud.
AUTHOR OF "MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS," "JOAN OF ARC," ETC.



LONDON
CHATTO & WINDUS

1911



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TO
DANIEL MANIN

IF that most noble soul, which here on earth
Was known as Manin, yet have consciousness
Of what is, and what is not, being not less
Than then he was, in courage and in worth,
Seeing the world whereon we sweat and strive ;
Shall he not know his Italy, and bless ?
And, in his own heart praise the steadfastness
That held him to his purpose when alive ?

Shall he not have reward for all his pain
Who, dying with his incompleated aim,
Saw failure only, and the bitter toll
Of loved ones lost, and lost, it seemed, in vain ?
Must not that heart still keep his country's name
Though o'er him all Death's waters heave and roll ?

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

DANIEL MANIN, *President of the Venetian Republic.*

PEZZATO, *his secretary and friend.*

TOMMASEO,

SIRTORI,

MINOTTO,

AVESANI,

VARÈ,

TORNIELLO,

BALDISSEROTTO,

} *Members of the National Assembly.*

PINCHERLE, *Minister of Finance.*

GENERAL CAVEDALIS, *Minister of War.*

CASTELLANI,

BELLINI,

LUIGI,

FOSSOMBRONI,

} *Members of the Volunteers, known as
Bandieri e Moro.*

GIORGIO MANIN, *son of the President.*

VASSEUR, *French Consul at Venice.*

CLINTON DAWKINS, *English Consul.*

BEPPPO, *a wailer.*

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

COSTANZA, *proprietor of café on the Piazza of St. Mark.*

GROSSI, *a gondolier.*

TONDELLI, *a factious demagogue.*

DATAICO MEDIN, *a Member of the Municipality.*

TERESA MANIN, *wife of the President.*

EMILIA MANIN, *his daughter.*

ANITA, *their servant.*

MADAME COSTANZA.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENERY.

ACT I.

SCENE 1.—*The Piazza of St. Mark.*

(*A few hours elapse.*)

SCENE 2.—*The same.*

(*Some four months elapse.*)

ACT II.

SCENE 1.—*MANIN'S private study in the Doge's Palace.*

SCENE 2.—*The Piazza of St. Mark.*

(*Six weeks elapse.*)

ACT III.

SCENE 1.—*The council hall in the Doge's Palace.*

SCENE 2.—*MANIN'S balcony on the Palace overlooking the Piazza.*

(*Ten days elapse.*)

ACT IV.

SCENE.—*MANIN'S house in San Paternan.*

PERIOD, MARCH TO AUGUST, 1849.

NOTE

GENERAL HAYNAU was in command of the besieging forces before Venice at the opening of the play, March, 1849. He was afterwards recalled to command the Austrian forces on the Danube fighting the Hungarians, and General Gorzkowski took his place; but I have retained the name of Haynau throughout the play for the sake of clearness and unity.

JOHN PRESLAND.

ACT I.

SCENE 1.—*The Piazza of St. Mark. On the middle right is seen the Church of St. Mark; and on the right front the Doge's Palace, with a door leading on to the Piazza and a balcony overlooking it. The shops under the façade running at the back, and left of the stage, are closed and shuttered, but a café, at centre back, is open, with the small tables set out on the pavement. The Piazza is deserted, except for BEPPO, the waiter, who puts out sugar-basins and water-bottles, singing and whistling to himself.*

BEPPO (*sings*). They loaded the donkey with oats and with hay—

There's nothing for *him* to eat!—

“Now carry our load, and travel our road,

Or your ass's hide we'll beat.”

“Wow!” said the donkey; “what is my share?”

“Stick is your share,” said they;

“What more do you need, when your betters
feed?

A share of our grub?” said they.

[*Exit into café.*

ACT I

VASSEUR. Here is the vantage point to see the show ;
They're due to pass soon.

Re-enter BEPPO singing.

C. DAWKINS. That is a most uncomely metaphor ;
Your Italy an ass.

BEPP0. But hear the end ;
The third verse is the moral of the song.

I hope your justice is not Austrian,
To hang a man ere half his case is heard.

C. DAWKINS. It has a moral?

BEPP0. Oh, be sure of that!

VASSEUR. Then sing it, Beppo; let me hear the end.

C. DAWKINS. End? There is no end to this people's songs,
A wedding, or a funeral, or a feast,
A battle, or a saint's day; all's the same,
All's one to them, they'll thrum a tune to it,
Their fingers still are itching for the strings.

BEPP0. To every nation, sir, its proper itch.
Catgut to us; if to the English, gold—
Which is the better?

VASSEUR (*to CLINTON DAWKINS*). There I think you're hit.

BEPP0 (*taking a guitar from inside the café—sings*).
He carried their oats and he carried their gold,
And a curse and a blow was his wage!—
“For we're a paternal, General or Colonel,
Sent by an Emperor sage.”
“Wow!” said the donkey; “this is my share,”
And out with his heels let he;
“I'll see what remains when I've scattered your brains—
The soul of a louse!” quoth he.

MANIN, AND THE

ACT I

C. DAWKINS. But still your Italy remains an ass—
Two coffees!

BEPP0. But the ass looked proper scorn
Upon that other animal I named.

[Exit BEPP0]

VASSEUR. A merry lad, that, with a ready tongue.

C. DAWKINS. This people has the trick of facile speech
Like priests, and women, and those weakling folk
Who have to conquer force by strength of brains.

VASSEUR. Yet, none the less, you wrong this Italy
To think their tongues the quickest part of them;
Action is quicker. Even Beppo here
Has carried arms, and with some credit too.
Last year he was in Milan——

C. DAWKINS. —When they rose?

VASSEUR. Ay, and a battle raged about the streets
Five days and nights, until Radetsky fled
With all his twenty thousand regulars,
Worsted by ill-armed, undrilled Milanese;
Faith triumphed over discipline and force,
If ever, there.

C. DAWKINS. But discipline came back
When Austria beat Piedmont in the field,
And took revenge of Milan.

SCENE I

DEFENCE OF VENICE

VASSEUR.

Discipline !

That was a butchery. Ask Beppo, here.

Re-enter BEPPO with coffee.

Beppo, you were in Milan when they rose ;
What scenes do you remember of those days ?

BEPPO. Nothing, except the clamour of the bells ;
Which clanged and thundered, shrieked and banged and
roared,
Sunrise to sunset ; when they ceased at night
My head so rang with them I could not take
The silence in my ears. Sometimes in dreams
I hear them still. Those days do seem less real
Than many a dream.

C. DAWKINS. But was there nothing else ?

BEPPO. Yes, I remember that my throat was parched
As if that horrible and deafening sound
Were my own voice. It makes me thirsty now !

C. DAWKINS. Nothing you saw of those heroic deeds
We heard so much about in after days ?

BEPPO. We just were fighting for our life and faith,
And had no time to think of how our deeds
Appeared to others ; yet I saw a lad,
Barely sixteen, rush on the bayonets

MANIN, AND THE

ACT I

Against a barricade, and with stretched arms
Gather them to his heart.

VASSEUR. So young a boy!

BEPP0. They shot his father ere he saw the light ;
And that day had he watched his mother die,
Struck by an Austrian bullet in the street,
Carrying water to a wounded man.

C. DAWKINS. Alas! the natural tragedy of war.

BEppo. I came upon a poor wretch in the street
Propped in the angle of a wall ; his chest
Was almost shot away, and he long cold ;
But ere he died, he wrote upon the wall
With his own blood, " Viva Italia !"
I saw the writing.

VASSEUR (to C. DAWKINS). You are moved at this?

C. DAWKINS. I must be, for a waste of gallant life.

BEPPLO. And still the living ass was worth, you see,
A couple of dead Austrians.—Your bill !

VASSEUR. We must drink water soon, if prices rise
As they are rising.

BEPPO. With a loan just due,
And paper money dropping every day,
We must be careful for the sake of Venice.

[Exit BЕРРО.

SCENE I

DEFENCE OF VENICE

C. DAWKINS. How did he give the Austrians the slip,
 After Milan was rendered up by Charles,
 Under the armistice? Indeed, I heard
 They shot and hanged by scores the wretched men
 Whom they laid hands on.

VASSEUR. Ay, they did not err
 To undue mercy, being victorious.
 Beppo was smuggled out by friends of mine,
 And his wounds with him.

C. DAWKINS. Yes, I marked he limped.

VASSEUR. They wrote to me of him, since he was set
 To come to Venice, being Venetian born.

C. DAWKINS. The fellow seems to court an Austrian rope
 To come to Venice, when he could escape
 To France or England; there will be again
 Numberless executions, banishments,
 Proscriptions, when the Austrians come in.

VASSEUR. When they *do* come.

C. DAWKINS. You think it possible
 They'll not reconquer Venice? That's the dream
 With which these feed their hopes, poor ignorants,
 And so walk on to death with open arms.

VASSEUR. 'Tis twelve months to a day since Manin went
 Alone, and unarmed, to the arsenal

MANIN, AND THE

ACT I

And took possession, while Count Palffy fled,
And, not a shot fired, Venice yet was free.
And all this year there has been perfect order
And perfect peace in Venice, when through Europe
There have been multitudinous revolts.
Piedmont and Lombardy in arms, and crushed ;
Naples revolted, and most horribly
Massacred by the foreign mercenaries
In her own streets ; Vienna risen too
Against the Emperor, though quickly quelled ;
Kossuth victorious, leading Hungary
Against the Austrian dominion ; France
Suffering change and change of government
Bewildering in swiftness. What may come
Out of the seething caldron of these strifes
I do not know, it may be Italy.

C. DAWKINS. Whatever change of government there be,
France will not fight, she waits a compromise.

VASSEUR. Yet I am sure she could not use her arms
For nobler ends than freeing Lombardy
From these oppressive Austrians ; perhaps
France yet may fight, if Piedmont will arise
And show herself victorious.

C. DAWKINS. The King
Declares the armistice is at an end,

SCENE I

DEFENCE OF VENICE

And rallies all his forces ; I believe
The war between them cannot last a month.

VASSEUR. We may have news of battle any hour.
If Charles were but as great a general
As he is patriot, it would be well.

C. DAWKINS. Venice will send a band of volunteers
To help him ?

VASSEUR. Do you hear the bells a-ringing ?
It is for joy of war declared again ;
This ardent people, greedy of success,
Sees every act consummate, ere begun.
This is a fête-day, for they celebrate
The freedom of their city, and the war
Declared by Piedmont ; there's the cry to arms
Among the doggerel and buffooneries
Sacred to carnival ; they are afire
For ball and sabre.

C. DAWKINS. That they'll have, I fear,
In running measure, ere the year is out.

Enter MANIN and his daughter EMILIA.

VASSEUR. Here comes the President.

C. DAWKINS. He ages fast.
Would you not say he carried sixty years
Rather than forty-five ?

ACT I

SCENE I

DEFENCE OF VENICE

MANIN. Twin spirit to your father, daughter mine.
Do you want more ?

Enter BEPPO.

BEPPO (*going to kiss MANIN's hand*). Good-day, dear President.

MANIN (*withdrawing it*). Pull down the awning, Beppo ; we
wait here
To see the carnival.

BEPPO. Oh, such a show !
The strangest animals you ever met
Outside the Revelations ! And a car
Highly symbolical of Italy ;
And bands of white coats, fastened tail to tail ;—
Recruits were scarce for them, no loyal Venetian
Would wear that colour ; so, poor Austrians,
They're made of straw.

EMILIA. You saw my brother too ?

BEPPO. Oh, brave ! a-fluting like the god of winds,
And all be-ribboned like a maid in May.
And are you well this morning ?

EMILIA. Very well.
Who could be ill with such good news about ?
And your wound, is it painful ?

BEPPO (*clicking his fingers*). So, so, so !
If it should heal completely, 'twere a pity :

MANIN, AND THE

ACT I

The Austrians would vanish from my mind.
I'll bring your coffee.

[Exit BEPPO singing.]

"Wow," said the donkey, "what is my share?"
"Steel is your share," said they.

VASSEUR *(to CLINTON DAWKINS)*. It gives my heart a
wrench to see that child.

C. DAWKINS. Her days are few, I fear; 'tis on her face.

VASSEUR. The day they put his daughter underground
They'll bury half of Manin's heart with her.

Enter TERESA and PEZZATO.

MANIN. We have been here this long while, loiterers.

PEZZATO. Yet you have missed the sight of all the day;
The Castellani, and their ancient foes
The Nicolletti, all a-changing scarves
In token of eternal amity.

TERESA. The charming fellows.

PEZZATO. It was like a play,
The huggings, and the kissings, and the vows
Of friendship and good-will. I would not stay,
Though Madam begged me, as I have no doubt
They'll fall to fighting soon, to demonstrate
Which loves the other most.

DEFENCE OF VENICE

PEZZATO. I may come
To doubt of all things, even my own soul,
But never Daniel.

EMILIA. The cruel jest !

PEZZATO. Vasseur looks this way;
I think he'd speak with you.

C. DAWKINS. Good-morning, sir, some wine?

MANIN. I thank you, no.

VASSEUR. It pays no duty to the Austrian.

MANIN, AND THE

ACT

MANIN. Unless I drink, then, I'm no patriot ? (*Sets himself.*)

C. DAWKINS. Beppo ! Chianti for the President.

[*Exit BEPPO.*]

MANIN. Have you no news yet ?

VASSEUR.

None.

MANIN.

It is confirmed,

Piedmont declared the armistice at end,
And took the field last week with all despatch ;
So any hour we may expect the news
Of an engagement, heavy with results
For us and Italy. It cannot be
That Venice should laconically hold off ;
Our volunteers are heart-hot to be gone,
And will embark to-morrow ; but I'd know
How France and England will regard that step.

C. DAWKINS. Sir, to deal frankly ; though my Government
Supports you morally—and, more than that,
Our rank and file are with you heart and soul—
Lord Palmerston desires me to say
You must expect no more than you have had
This seven months ; our English influence
Used at Vienna, for a peaceable
And satisfactory resettlement
Of this vexed question.

DEFENCE OF VENICE

That is as I feared :

England's for peace, no matter how it comes ;
She will not lend a sword, nor fire a gun
To save a nation from rank slavery.
I thank you for your openness of speech.

C. DAWKINS. But, sir, consider ; all our influence,
The weight we have in Europe's Cabinets,
Our moral forces, all are on your side.

MANIN. Ten thousand English sailors on our side
Were better, but being beggars—so the proverb ;
To teach us due humility. Well ! Well !
This influence which has been exercised
For seven months, has brought us nothing more
Than Haynau with his twenty thousand men
Upon our mainland, and an Austrian fleet,
Vigilant out to sea. It makes me fear
That the diplomacy of Austria
Outmatches England.

C. DAWKINS. Yet I must protest ;
Remember that we have to make a peace—
And peace with terms acceptable to you—
Between your Venice, a revolted state,
And Austria, its liege.

MANIN (*passionately*). And liege since when?
Not forty years, since Venice, being free,

MANIN, AND THE

ACT I

Was given to the maw of Austria,
Greedy for Empire, when Prince Metternich
Partitioned Europe with a butcher's knife.—
Pardon me ; 'tis not you I would offend,
But well I see we must not look for help,
Till we prove independent of your help.
Even that empty honour that I crave,
Your formal recognition of our state,
Is still denied me.

C. DAWKINS (*rising*). And I must believe
Wisely denied you ; though my words offend.
Good-morning to you. Beppo!

[*Gives money and exit.*]

BEPPPO. That shall go
Into the fund for Venice ; so a curse
May turn a blessing.

[*Exit BEPPPO.*]

VASSEUR. Well, Sir President,
You grieved our English friend.

MANIN. I'm sorry for 't ;
He's honest and most upright, kindly too,
For he gives money privately to help
The sick and wounded ; and has something risked
When he was younger and adventurous,
To smuggle out Italian refugees
Hunted by Austria.

DEFENCE OF VENICE

How can he be

So blind to greatness, with a generous heart?

MANIN. His God is "Things Established"; unto whom

He sacrifices all the impulses

And noble purposes, which have their root

In that divine rebellion, which at times

A nation may be called to.

'Tis to France

That you must look ; for Bastide bids me say

He does encourage you with all his heart.

MANIN. Yet our Republic goes unnamed by him ;

Unrecognized as an accomplished fact.

VASSEUR. You must have patience.

More than that, God knows :

Yet to have patience taxes more than all.

EMILIA (*coming to him*). Here is the carnival.

Let us withdraw.

(They retire under the awning to the back of the café.)

Enter the procession of the Carnival, accompanied by a noise of flutes, trombones, whistles, shouts, calls, and a variety of strange noises made by those who are dressed as animals. There is a car, with a figure symbolic of Italy standing over the prostrate body of Austria, with a boar's head; it is accompanied by a number of elephants, giraffes, asses and horses, two men being under each

MANIN, AND THE

ACT I

skin as in a pantomime. Each has a rider, whom it endeavours to throw off. The Piazza becomes crowded with spectators, many with paper flowers, or confetti, which they throw. There is also a band of young men, dressed in Venetian dress of the fifteenth century, carrying a great red banner. They sing :

Here we come
With a rum-tum-tum,
Beating a great big Austrian drum.

BEPPO. Beat your belly, my lad, for an Austrian drum.

They sing :

Here we come,
With a fee-faw-fum
We'll gobble up whole this Venetian scum.

GROSSI (*a gondolier*). Here's the Venetian scum. Quick, quick;
To it, my lads.

ANOTHER. They shall taste our stick.

GROSSI. Crack on their skulls!

ANOTHER. On their skulls, not we,
The tail is all of the beast we shall see.

(They produce dummies in Austrian uniforms, and, propping them up, fight a sham battle.)

GIORGIO. Ho! courage, courage, I'll eat all you kill.

GROSSI. By supper-time I think you'll eat your fill.

SCENE I

DEFENCE OF VENICE

BEPPO. There's valiancy for you ; Austria
Is badly worsted.

COSTANZA. They are made of straw.

BEPPO. If they would burn as easily !

CASTELLANI (*master of ceremonies*). Stand, there !
Come forward, Austria and Italy.
Now for your duologue.

BELLINI. Fee ! Faw ! Fum !
Eat us up, Austria ; why are you glum ?
One snap of your mouth, no more to be done,
And Italy's gobbled.

ITALY. Now then, come.
I shall never be finished.

CASTELLANI. Listen, I say.

ITALY. Austria, I defy thee.

GROSSI. That's well said.
Brava ! brava ! Well spoken.

ITALY. Hear me through——

GIORGIO. What, you're not finished ?

ITALY. I have not begun.

GIORGIO. Oh, Italy, it will be said of you
That you're long-winded.

MANIN, AND THE

ACT I

BELLINI.

Ay, and short-lived too.

GIORGIO. Oh, stay your curvettings, unruly steed.

ELEPHANT (*throwing him and bolting*). Now catch us if your elephant you need!

(A chase round the Piazza, in which all the carnival take part. The elephant finally dashes into the café, knocking over tables and chairs; and comes to ground at MANIN'S feet.)

MANIN (*rises*). The poor beast then is run to earth at last.

ALL. The President!

(They remove hats, masks, and animal heads.)

CASTELLANI. Your pardon, sir, we did not guess you here.

MANIN. Why, Castellani, I may watch the fun
As much as any of you.

CASTELLANI.

Sir, indeed,

We lack you, even in our carnival.

MANIN. I'm with you in it. I might wish, perhaps,
You'd show your gaiety another way
Than beating dummy Austrians.

BELLINI.

Our hand

Will be so much the slicker when it comes
To grapple flesh and blood.

LUIGI.

And that is when?

SCENE I

DEFENCE OF VENICE

MANIN. I cannot tell.

LUIGI. I hope it may be soon.

GROSSI. When do we start against the Austrians ?

MANIN. To-morrow will the volunteers set out
To join with Piedmont.

BELLINI. Now hurrah for war !

(Cries of "Hurrah ! hurrah ! for war !")

MANIN. Be silent all,

You know not what you say ; if right can come
By any other means, pray God for it.
War is the last and terrible resource
A nation comes to in necessity,
Not to be undertaken with loud shouts,
Vain, idle boastings ; but with quiet minds
And due authority. If we must fight
We'll fight while we may stand.

ALL. We will, we will.

MANIN. But pray for peace !

CASTELLANI. Yet fighting it must be ;
Piedmont has risen to free Lombardy.

MANIN. This is a solemn moment ; we prepare
To pit our strength against the disciplined
And iron ranks of Austria ; but now

SCENE I

DEFENCE OF VENICE

MANIN.

Good-bye to you.

[Exit VASSEUR.]

(As MANIN and his family are about to enter the
Doge's Palace he is stopped by a soldier.)

SOLDIER. Sir President !

MANIN (*turning back*). You called me ?

SOLDIER.

Sir, a letter,

Sent from the enemy.

[*Salutes and exit.*]

MANIN.

Go in, Teresa ;

I'll join you shortly.

[*Exeunt EMILIA and TERESA.*]

MANIN.

Quick, Pezzato, here !

PEZZATO. Bad news you have ?

MANIN.

Worse, worse than bad, Andrio ;

An inconceivable calamity.

Read Haynau's letter ; he has had the news

Hot from Radetsky, that the Piedmontese

Were cut to pieces, routed utterly

Yesterday at Novara, and the King,

Heart-broken, abdicated on the field

To his young son.

PEZZATO.

Oh, God, if this be truth

It is more crushing than our darkest fears

Envisaged ever. I must dare to hope

MANIN, AND THE

ACT I

It is but Haynau's ruse to draw us in
To rash capitulation.

MANIN.

Yet I fear !

But we must wait with patience, as we may,
The confirmation. Go, then, Andrio,
To Cavedalis and Tommaseo,
And all the members of the Government ;
Make them acquainted with this present news,
Bid them be ready ; I will summon them,
When we have certainty, to meet straightway,
Day-time or night-time, for a secret sitting.

Enter CASTELLANI, LUIGI, and FOSSOMBRONI.

CASTELLANI (*running*). Let me be first to you with this good
news.

Radetsky once again is put to flight
With all his troops ; he leaves five thousand dead
Upon the field ; all Lombardy is free ;
Padua, Mantua, and Brescia
Have cast their tyrants out ; they promise us
To raise the siege of Venice in a month.

BEPPPO. Viva Italia !

ALL.

Carlo Alberto, viva !

MANIN (*going up steps of Palace*). Go home, go home, the rain
begins to fall ;

These are but rumours for your greedy ears.

SCENE I

DEFENCE OF VENICE

CASTELLANI. Dear President, 'tis true.

MANIN. Whence came the news ?

CASTELLANI. Luigi had it from a gondolier,
Who had it from a soldier of the forts,
Who had it, I suppose, from Haynau's line.

MANIN. Go home, go home, and if this news be true
We will rejoice to be confirmed of it ;
If not, we waste our lungs to bellow out
Our "vivas" on the Square. What, Andrio,
Not gone yet ?

PEZZATO. Then my orders are the same ?

MANIN. The same indeed.

[Exit PEZZATO.

Good-night to all of you.

[Exit into Doge's Palace.

LUIGI. Come, Carlo, let us have a glass of wine,
Since our stupendous news has fallen flat.

Enter BELLINI.

BELLINI. Luigi, Fossombroni, Castellani,
Where is the President ?

LUIGI. But just gone in.

BELLINI. Has he not heard the news ?

MANIN, AND THE

ACT I

- CASTELLANI. We told it him ;
Ay, and were rather scolded for our pains.
- BELLINI. Scolded ! Oh, God, what said you——
- CASTELLANI. What's *your* news ?
- BELLINI. The Piedmontese are beaten utterly.
Thousands are dead, and thousands prisoner.
The King has abdicated——
- LUIGI. No, I say ;
We heard the opposite.
- BELLINI. A victory ?
- LUIGI. Complete and absolute.
- BELLINI. Would it were truth !
- BEPPLO. Call for the President ; he surely knows.
- CASTELLANI. President ! Manin ! Manin ! come to us.
- COSTANZA. Beat on the door.
- GROSSI. What is the truth of this ?
(*MANIN appears on the balcony in answer to their
cries ; his face is very grave.*)
- MANIN. Why do you call me here ? What do you want ?
- CASTELLANI. Bellini here brings news of our defeat ;
We had the rumour of our victory.
As you do love us, let us know the truth.

MANIN. I do not know ; myself am wanting it.
To-morrow will bring surety ; wait for that.

BEPPPO. It is the worst—it is the worst he fears.
I know his look.

MANIN. I say I will not fear ;
Only make every avenue as safe
As human caution can, and school my heart
To take the best or worst with fortitude.
Go home, dear people ; when to-morrow comes
I'll not deceive you.

[Exit above.]

BEPPPO. 'Tis the worst he fears.

CASTELLANI. Better the worst at once than this suspense.

GROSSI. I will go ask their news at Malghera.

[Exit.]

(The people sorrowfully disperse in the gathering darkness ; COSTANZA closes his café and goes in ; the lights are put out.)

CASTELLANI. Bellini, will you watch with me to-night ?
I could not lie beneath a quiet roof
With these most tragic doubts still unresolved.

BELLINI. Ay, rest here on the steps ; if news arrives
The messenger must pass us.

CASTELLANI. Can you sit ?
I am too fevered. If that news be true,

MANIN, AND THE

ACT I

Three days of hope and glory ; then an end ;
And Italy dragged back to chains again.
Oh, God, for morning, and to know the truth !

*(The scene closes, with CASTELLANI, BELLINI, and
LUIGI waiting in the dark square with their
cloaks drawn round them. BEPPO and the
others shelter themselves, one on a chair in the
deserted café, another on the steps of St. Mark.
CASTELLANI strides up and down like a sentinel.
All the lights go out, save one—in the Doge's
Palace.)*

SCENE 2.—*The same.*

*When the curtain rises the morning is breaking. LUIGI is asleep
in the café, BEPPO on the steps of the Palace, CASTELLANI still
keeping his sentinel watch.*

*Enter from Palace TOMMASEO, SIRTORI, AVESANI, MINOTTO,
CAVEDALIS, and others of the council.*

CAVEDALIS. Good-night ; you will go home a-foot ?

MINOTTO.

We must ;

There are no gondolas.

CAVEDALIS.

Come this way, then.

[Exeunt with others.]

SCENE II

DEFENCE OF VENICE

CASTELLANI. Tell us the news, sir ; is it bad or good ?

TOMMASEO. Bad—more than bad. Piedmont is crushed indeed,
And there are many thousand stark and stiff
Upon Italian soil.

CASTELLANI. Oh, better dead,
Than living to hear this.

BELLINI. And Lombardy ?

TOMMASEO. Must fall again ; must fall now any day.
Brescia still holds out ; though thrice assailed ;
But, wanting help, must fall.

BELLINI. Then ours that help !

TOMMASEO. There's other work for us.

CASTELLANI. So work there be !

AVESANI. And let me counsel you, go home to bed—
That's your work now ; you have not seen your pillow
For six-and-thirty hours, I'll be bound ;
And this gay dress of yours speaks reveller
Upon a daylight street.

CASTELLANI. We put them on
To celebrate Charles Albert in the field,
And ere the day was done he knew defeat.

BELLINI. Oh, Signor Tommaseo, as you are kind
May we not know how Venice's fate was sealed
By you in council ?

MANIN, AND THE

ACT I

SIRTORI. In an hour or so
The text of Manin's speech will be proclaimed
At every corner. Come, Tommaseo.

BELLINI. Sir, we have waited in the rain all night.
Will you not satisfy us?

SIRTORI. Come, come, come,
These boys will keep us chattering all day,
And there's enough for all to do, God knows.

BEPPLO. Signor Sirtori will lock up his mouth
As if there were a treasure in his head.
What does he fear? There's none will steal his brains.

SIRTORI. If you will stand and gossip in the gutter,
I'll leave you, Tommaseo.

[*Exit.*]

TOMMASEO. No, no, I come.
Go, all of you, and take a good sound sleep,
And, ere you sleep, a good sound meal as well—
The last good meal this side of Paradise,
Who knows—for Venice now will stand again,
As she has stood this seven months and more,
Alone against the might of Austria.

CASTELLANI. We fight, we fight! . . . Thank God!

BELLINI (*knocking at café*). Costanza, hi!
We fight, we fight!

Enter COSTANZA, yawning. A crowd quickly collects, of artizans going to work, gondoliers, market men and women with baskets of provisions ; the people come out of their shops in the façade.

COSTANZA. Who ? Where ?

BELLINI. The Austrians.

It is decided ; cheer the President !

Enter PEZZATO, from the Palace.

PEZZATO. Oh, what a noisy crowd of fools it is,
In all my years I have known fools enough,
But never noisier. What ! What ! good people,
Have none of you a shelter for your heads,
An occupation for your idle bodies,
That you must stand and yelp here night and day ?
Go, earn your living with your honest sweat ;
Get you about your business, all of you ;
Or, if you're cursed with idleness, go home,
And be you idle by your fireside.

BELLINI. What business is it of Pezzato, pray,
If we would cheer the President ?

PEZZATO. Oh, ay !
The President, you'd cheer the President ?
I swear you'll rather kill the President
If you come clamouring about his doors,

MANIN, AND THE

ACT I

Day-time and night-time. Must he never rest ?
He watches by his daughter's bedside now,
Who is most suffering.

CASTELLANI. We're fools enough,
I give you reason. Come, Bellini, come.
We thank you deeply, Signor Tommaseo,
For your frank speech ; you shall not prove us backward,
When action comes.

Enter MANIN from the Palace.

MANIN. Not gone yet, Niccolo ?
Pray leave this letter at the house of Vasseur
When you go by it.

TOMMASEO. Willingly I will.

MANIN. Why is so large a crowd collected here
This hour in the morning ?

TOMMASEO. These brave lads
Had waited all night in the rain for news,
And, having had it from me, they collect
A crowd forthwith to cheer you.

CASTELLANI. President !
One thing alone averts despair from us,
That Venice still resists.

MANIN. Count well the cost
Ere you cry " Viva ! " This resistance means

DEFENCE OF VENICE

War in grim earnest ; every sacrifice
Will be exacted from you ; it may be
You fight a losing battle.

CASTELLANI.

Yet we fight.

MANIN. That is well spoken; he who dares to fight
Enrol himself among the volunteers.
Give me a table; I will take the names.
Come, we need every man who holds a gun;
Your names, your names!

(A table and chair are brought into the Square, and

MANIN *seats himself.*)

CASTELLANI.

Take mine.

BELLINI.

And mine.

LUIGI.

And mine.

MANIN. Slower, of grace, I cannot mark them all.

COSTANZA. Write mine, Sir President.

MANIN.

Costanza, you.

Your wife is sickly ; who will mind your business ?

COSTANZA. Itself, itself; if they should pick me off—

And my great belly makes an easy mark

For any shot—my children will not starve.

MANIN. No, not till I starve with them, though mayhap

It will be starving Venice. 'Tis the time

ACT I

BEPPPO. Take my name down.

BEPPO. Had they maimed my arms,
I'd have complained against their courtesy ;
But for a leg—the better ; I can't run
From our good friends the Austrians.

A WOMAN (*bringing forward a young lad*). My son!
They shot my eldest fifteen years ago,
He and his father on the self-same day.
My second is in Brescia even now.
I do not grudge the youngest.

MANIN. That's well done!

Cecco. (*an artisan*). Here, let me reach him. I enrol myself!
I never thought to fight; I am a coward,
Sir President, from birth, but if you need me,
Why, I can trundle off and get me shot
As well as better men.

MANIN. I put your name
Upon a roll of honour for all time.

DEFENCE OF VENICE

Enter CLINTON DAWKINS.

C. DAWKINS. Sir, I am overjoyed to find you here.
I have this moment heard the grievous news
Of Piedmont's great catastrophe. I hasten
To offer you my services at once
To carry messages across the lines
To General Haynau; I will go in person
To represent to him the urgency
Of keeping fast the armistice until—
Until you do decide to—

MANIN. You would say,
"Capitulate"?

CASTELLANI. Shrivel the tongue that says it !

MANIN. I thank you, sir, but the Assembly met,
And voted for resistance.

C. DAWKINS. Folly, folly!
Where can resistance lead you?

CASTELLANI. To the grave,
If nowhere else.

C. DAWKINS. What is a single city—
For single in resistance you will be
Since Piedmont fell—against the mighty power
Of that Imperial Austria?

CASTELLANI. Yet still
A single city is a single truth
Against the banded lies of Europe.

MANIN, AND THE

ACT I

C. DAWKINS.

Sir,

You let young rashness sway you with hot speech
At such a time ?

MANIN (*sadly*).

You'll see that they'll die well.

C. DAWKINS. You'll sacrifice this city ?

MANIN.

Sacrifice

This city must ; it is prepared for it.
You waste your kindness, sir ; for your free England,
Steeped in well-being many centuries,
Cannot conceive this passion that we have
Towards our country's freedom, that it seems
A little thing to die in her defence,
A great to be rewarded in her love,
Glorious beyond hope to see her name
Honoured among the nations. If there be
Any in England who will understand
Such fervour, surely we may claim their praise,
Theirs also, in our page of history.
Let them know this, that Venice will resist ;
Reckoning the sacrifices and the loss,
Still undismayed, she throws the gauntlet down
To Austria, to Europe, to all those
Who would impose the yoke of tyranny.
Not in vainglory does she challenge them,
But of set purpose, never to be turned ;
Till liberty and justice may be hers.

ACT II.

SCENE I. — MANIN'S *Private Study in the Doge's Palace.*

MANIN and PEZZATO at a table covered with papers.

PEZZATO. And so Pasini's letter finishes—

When all the compliments are purged away
France will not help us.

MANIN. We have need of help

If ever people had ; that recent change
In the Cabinet of Paris has been fatal,
Bastide was well-disposed to us.

PEZZATO. Oh, ay !

And here Pasini writes he interviewed
Louis Napoleon, " who spoke most kindly,"
" Who must indeed respect a gallant people
Fighting at odds !" The fleet has positive orders
To help us every way that in them lies,
Save—on my soul, I laugh—save fire a gun !

MANIN. I wish I could laugh also, Andrio ;
France was to be our saviour, so they said.

ACT II

PEZZATO.

I'd rather deal with England, giving nothing,
And nothing promising, than with this France,
To whom we look for help, while red-hot bombs
Come humming round our noddles in the street,
And send us scattering from our honest beds
By dropping down our chimneys of a night.

PEZZATO.

There never will be silence any more
Till Venice is reconquered——

MANIN.

—or set free.

PEZZATO. You do not think it?

MANIN.

I must believe there is a truth of things,
A faith, a justice, call it what you will,
A spirit of right and order in the world ;
Else life is no life, but a form of death,
The shadow of a nightmare. See you, friend,

I'll argue closely, it is not for nothing
I am a lawyer. Given the premiss
That right and wrong exist, and right being right
As such is to be followed, we in Venice
Have scorned the wrong, and closely followed right,
And right is freedom, birth-right, heaven-right.
We follow freedom, is not freedom ours ;
Have we not well deserved it, Andrio ?

PEZZATO. If to deserve were but to have, my friend !

MANIN. Oh, there is none in Venice but's a hero,
Worthy a monument of other towns.
The civic guards, the soldiers, bandiera,
I do not speak of ; well I knew they'd fight ;
They are more eager for Radetsky's lead
Than is a bridegroom for his bride ; but all,
But every soul that breathes Venetian air
And speaks our mother tongue is noble now.
I visited the civil hospital
But yesterday, and, passing by the bed
Of one old woman, dying, I could see,
A beggar—so they told me—all her life,
I spoke some words of comfort ; she replied—
Her eyes fast glazing with the film of death—
“ Much more, much more than life I do desire,
The freedom of my country.”

MANIN, AND THE

ACT II

PEZZATO.

'Tis not now

The "right" that governs, but its rhyming cousin
"Might" only; half a million fighting men,
Bound by the iron chain of discipline,
That can be hurled by one directing brain
In solid impact.

MANIN.

We defy this might!

Kossuth, in Hungary, has shown the world
What may be done by one determined man
Against a million.

PEZZATO.

Kossuth's well enough;

Pray God he prosper, he's our only anchor;
When *he* parts we must go upon the rocks.

MANIN. Where is his letter? It is two months old,
But has been long a-coming; he will march
With his Hungarians and raise the siege,
Once he has made his terms with Austria.

PEZZATO. He should have come last year; we begged him
then

To make alliance with us; now I doubt
But he will come too late.

MANIN.

Still, still you croak.

Well are you called "The Raven," Andrio.

SCENE I

DEFENCE OF VENICE

PEZZATO. I love but two things, Italy and you.

And, if I scold and grumble all day long,

'Tis only like a mother, loving more.

MANIN. None ever had a truer friend than I.

(A knock at the door.)

MANIN. Who's there? Come in.

Enter CASTELLANI.

What, Castellani, you?

CASTELLANI. I am the bearer of a letter, sir,

From General Ulloa.

MANIN. Sit down and wait;

It may be I shall want you. See, Pezzato,

Ulloa bears out fully what you said.

CASTELLANI. Sir, shall I wait without?

MANIN. You'll be discreet,

I trust your tongue; though I have heard it said

Discretion is the least of all your virtues.

PEZZATO. He's guessed the purport too, I make no doubt,

Of this same letter.

CASTELLANI. No, we feared to guess,

Lest it should be defeat.

PEZZATO. What Ulloa writes

I have expected for this score of days;

MANIN, AND THE

ACT II

It is impossible to hold the fort
Another day and night.

MANIN (*reading*). "No fort remains,
A heap of ruins only; battlements,
Ramparts, embrasures, beaten to the ground,
The gunners and their guns are now exposed
To murderous fire, for the parapets
Are crushed to rubble; yet they keep their posts
Until their guns are useless."

CASTELLANI. Ay, and more;
Three days and nights at the Rizzardi fort
The gunners would not leave their batteries,
But, almost without food, they stood and slept
Beside their guns, until the enemy
Silenced them finally.

MANIN. He does compute
In less than eighty hours that there have been
A hundred thousand bullets, balls, and bombs
Thrown into Malghera; the ground is ploughed
As if an earthquake raged, great cracks appear
Large enough to conceal a team of guns.
"Let Austria take Malghera," he says;
"They will not take a fortress."

CASTELLANI. None the less,
In yielding that we yield Italian ground!

MANIN. Pezzato, write ; he must evacuate.

To his discretion leave the means and time.

CASTELLANI. When my companions saw me setting out

And knew I carried letters, in their hearts

They wished I might fall dead upon the road

Before I reached you, so they fear surrender.

MANIN. And when the enemy will make assault

Haynau can hurl his twenty thousand men

On our two thousand, with their ruined walls.

Fight as they would—and fight I know they would—

The living force of numbers must prevail,

Must overwhelm them.

CASTELLANI.

What's our life for, else ?

MANIN. Your life's for Venice ; save it for her need,

And do not waste it for a selfish act

Of momentary daring. You may go ;

Carry this letter to the General.

[CASTELLANI *salutes, and exit.*

PEZZATO. That Castellani has more heart than brain.

MANIN. I love the lad ; he is the very type

Of generous Italy ; if he should live—

Pray God he do—till he be middle-aged

You will not find that he is lacking brains.

And now a proclamation, Andrio,

To our Venetians ; we must hearten them

MANIN, AND THE

ACT II

Against this loss, and call on volunteers
To help destroy that mighty bridge of ours
That joins us to the mainland ; that once down,
The City is impregnable indeed.

PEZZATO. And we can hold it, then, till Kossuth comes ?

MANIN. I do not know ; pray God he comes in time !
I'll not deceive myself how grave a case
We stand in ; now that Malghera must go,
Our last great post upon the mainland fall
To Austria, the ring of steel and fire
Narrows and narrows perilously in.
Yet still salvation may be had—who knows ?—
Of France or England, just the lightest straw
May balance them towards us ; write again,
Recall their promises, exhort them, plead ;
Being great, being free, their influence should be
Against oppression ; let them make us terms
That we can take, we'll take them ; we must keep
A semblance of our freedom ; if no more—
Cannot they understand ? Go, let them know
Vienna keeps them dangling on a string
Till, free of Kossuth, she can spring on us ;
And once her claws are fastened in our flesh,
They may protest with diplomatic notes
Against our treatment, but she will not heed.

SCENE I

DEFENCE OF VENICE

PEZZATO. I've little faith in it, but I will write
To Lamartine and Palmerston again.

[Exit PEZZATO; re-enter immediately with a despatch.]

Here's a despatch a soldier brings for you,
Sent from the enemy.

MANIN. See, open too!
A trick that's worthy them, to sap our men
By sending menaces to us unsealed.

PEZZATO. What is the purport?

MANIN. 'Tis from General Haynau,
Addressing us paternally—he grieves
To use his guns against us—summons us
Back to the fold of Austria again.
Read it yourself, it is not worth a laugh.

PEZZATO (*reading*). Upon my soul, it is a goodly meal
To stuff the belly of a hypocrite.

MANIN. Yet you must summon the Assembly here
To meet at noon, they must be judge of it.

Enter Servant.

SERVANT. The English Consul craves a word with you.

MANIN. Admit him.

[Exit Servant.]

PEZZATO. I'll go write.

MANIN, AND THE

ACT II

Enter CLINTON DAWKINS.

C. DAWKINS. Good-morning, sirs.

MANIN. Good-morning to you also.

C. DAWKINS. You are well?

Your daughter too I hope?

MANIN. No, not to-day.

C. DAWKINS. It grieves me. And yourself, Signor Pezzato?

PEZZATO. I have the English spleen on me to-day.

C. DAWKINS. This damp air does engender it, I fear.

PEZZATO. It is the English air engenders it.

[Exit PEZZATO.]

C. DAWKINS. Your secretary does not love me much.

MANIN. His tongue's a burr, and sticks like one sometimes,

But sound his heart is. Have you news to-day?

C. DAWKINS. No news at all, I fear, Sir President,
Save what yourself have heard a hundred times,
That England gives her diplomatic weight
To mediate 'twixt Austria and you.
And yet once more I beg to recommend
The wisdom of the course.

MANIN. O' God's name, sir,

Have I not said, ay, clamoured it aloud
In Paris and in London many months,

We'll put ourselves in French and English hands,
Trusting in their integrity and justice,
If they will undertake the terms shall be
Such as our honour can accept. I begged
They would but make a separate sovereignty
Of Lombardo-Venetia, with a Prince—
Austrian, if he must be—over us,
But let us have some semblance of fair rule,
And civic freedom ; anything, indeed,
Except that former governance, with spies,
False witnesses, corrupted justice, threats,
Informations, scourgings without trial,
And, at the last, the bandage round the eyes
One raw grey morning, back against the wall,
A row of rifles at the breast ! All this
Without a word being heard in his defence.

C. DAWKINS. I know that you have suffered, but, I think
These late events will prove a wholesome lesson
To Austria.

MANIN. And were they back again
They'd bind us surely, ay, and gag us too,
That no untoward cries might shock the ears
Of Paris and of London's ministers.
How fares our stricken Lombardy, how fare
Padua, Milan, Brescia ? They dress

Italians in their hated uniform,
And if one leaves them, driven out by hate,
His family must give up hostages ;
And if one harbours the deserting wretch,
He dies ; they shoot our poor Italians down
For everything ; for nothing ; a pretext.
They shot one man before his own house door,
Because an enemy had hid a nail
Under his pillow ; that was harbouring arms
According to their reading of the law.

C. DAWKINS. Yet, yet, I do beseech you, this is bad,
But mark your actions, ere you make it worse.
You know that your resistance is in vain.
The hundred thousand souls within this city
Are decimated by cholera,
Over two hundred perished in a week,
For many live in cellars underground,
Their houses uninhabitable now
From Austrian cannon, volleying day and night
Their bombshells on the city ; more than that,
Famine awaits you ; though you husbanded
With careful forethought such a store of grain
As you could gather, it must have an end,
And you must starve ; for land and sea are closed,
Nothing can run the Austrian blockade.
I wonder, have you dared to walk the streets

And hear the tolling of the funeral bell,
And see the last sad offices performed
In every church from morning until night?
There is no woman but the trace of tears
Is on her face; a father, brother, son,
Has laid his life down, 'neath the dreadful hail
That scourges Venice; childless women creep
With yearning faces, ever through your streets,
For, with the growing heat on your lagoons,
The cholera makes fierce and rapid strides,
And ever to the graveyards goes the line
Of little coffins.

MANIN. Oh, I know, I know!

C. DAWKINS. You cannot for your private stubbornness
Have this upon your conscience. Be advised!
I hear it bruited in the streets to-day
That Haynau sends a summons once again,
To give up Venice.

MANIN. True enough; he sends it
Unsealed, from hand to hand, a deed that lacks
Custom and courtesy. Pray read it.

C. DAWKINS. Here
He offers peace—the "olive branch" his phrase—
Grieving that so much suffering should be
Inflicted on this people, begs you spare

MANIN, AND THE

ACT II

Yourself and him. His tone is moderate
Even to kindness.

MANIN.

This is the man

Who loosed a three days' sack on Brescia
After he captured it! You do not know,
You do not keep your ears alert for news
As we poor wretches must. If I should tell you—
Such cruelties and such horrors there were seen
As in the days ere men were civilized.
Who else but devils but had had respect
For such a gallant foe, who held them off
Though thrice assailed, against tremendous odds?
They shot, hanged, burned and tortured every man
Who might have carried arms; but more, but more,
But sick and wounded, old men, women, babes,
The weak and helpless; and they left undone
No deed that history's black page can show—
Plunder, and rape, and butchery, and flames!
He with the olive branch! They buried there,
Careless, the living with the dead!

C. DAWKINS.

And this!

This is the fate that you prepare for Venice?

MANIN. Oh, God! It is not so!

C. DAWKINS.

While there is time,

Consider wisely, on your head it is

To save or ruin Venice.

SCENE I

DEFENCE OF VENICE

MANIN. Leave me, pray,
I am not well—no, nothing—my old pain
That takes me at the heart—a little rest,
I shall be well again.

C. DAWKINS. I'll write once more
Begging Lord Palmerston to intervene.

MANIN (*motioning him away with a hand at his heart*). To inter-
vene? Ay do! Farewell.

C. DAWKINS. Farewell.
I grieve that you are ill; I'll send some wine
That still is in my cellar, to your house.
[*Exit CLINTON DAWKINS. MANIN remains long motionless.*]

Enter PEZZATO.

PEZZATO. Daniel!

MANIN. Andrio, reach me here your hand.

PEZZATO. What is the matter?

MANIN. You must give a heave,
To pull me out of hell.

PEZZATO. What is it, friend?

MANIN. I say I've been in hell; keep close your grip
Or I shall sink again. You hear me now?
It is *my* will to fight the Austrians,

MANIN, AND THE

ACT II

A satisfaction of *my* vanity
To figure greatly. *I* who let them die,
My people, as they die around me now !

PEZZATO. This wild and fevered speech—what mean you,
friend ?

MANIN. I say I am blood-guilty ; on my soul
Lie all the souls that perish every day
In this beleaguered state ; they weight me down
Until hell's bottom is not deep enough
For me to sink. I sacrifice this people ?
My people, my Venetians, for this end,
That I may keep the heavy power I wear
A few weeks longer ; I prepare for them
A second Brescia !

PEZZATO. It is not true.

MANIN. You do not think it true ?

PEZZATO. I know it false.
I know you bear the burden of this State
Because none other can. And if you doubt
That Venice would surrender, come with me
And ask the people ; they would sooner charge
Up to the cannon's mouth.

MANIN. But Brescia !
We cannot bring a butchery like that
Upon our city. We must come to terms

Before our bread be eaten, our last shot
Fired on Austria.

PEZZATO. Where is the letter ?
What terms will Haynau give ?

MANIN. No terms, no terms !
Dishonourable surrender. Terms, you say ?
What terms do masters give escaping slaves ?
That will he give to Venice ; first the scourge,
And then the old routine of slavery.
It is not possible for this proud people,
That has known liberty for fourteen months !
Not possible !

PEZZATO. But we must not despair,
While still that loaf remains uneaten, Daniel.
Perchance yet Kossuth may arrive in time ;
Perchance we may yet make a compromise
That we can swallow, though with sour mouths.

MANIN. So there is something yet to do, thank God !
I felt the steel-fanged trap close round just now,
And hold me fast ; but while there's work to do
There cannot be despair. To work ! to work !
I know that the Assembly will reject
The General's offer ; 'tis but for the form
We'll read it to them. Let the news be known
That Venice still resists.

MANIN, AND THE

ACT II

PEZZATO.

Brave words again !

Take you a little rest now (*going*).

MANIN (*calls him*).

Andrio !

I am too busy in this life of mine,
Too worn with cares and sorrows, day and night,
To think upon myself ; the consul's words
Have touched me on a cord I thought long still,
My personal esteem. When I am dead,
If you should hear me slandered—as I know
Is done by Europe now—take up a lance,
Declare that all I did, for right or wrong,
I did for Venice only, and her love,
Without a thought beyond. There's not a stone
But here is sacred to me ; I would shed
My blood in drops upon the city's dust
To consecrate it from a Croatian heel.
I would be like Prometheus indeed,
And in my own soul for a thousand years
Suffer for all this people.—Pardon me !
It is the hour of my spirit's weakness,
Which only friendship's eye has ere beheld,
And friendship should tie up his tongue. No more,
No words. To work ! to work !

PEZZATO.

That we resist

Stiffens my heart. Pray sign these documents
That they may be despatched.

MANIN (*signing them*). We will resist !

For all our lives are in the hand of God,

But in our own hands our own honour lies.

SCENE 2.—*The Piazza of St. Mark.* CASTELLANI, BELLINI,
LUIGI, FOSSOMBRONI, and other members of the *bandiera*
seated outside the café.

CASTELLANI. But listen to old Haynau, all of you.

I have that letter of his copied out.

BELLINI. Read it us, then.

CASTELLANI. Prepare to weep, I say ;

A flood, my brothers, ere I've finished.

LUIGI. What !

Is it so moving ?

CASTELLANI. To the very soul !

A spiritual cathartic.

FOSSOMBRONI. Purge away !

Bellini here looks fat—though God knows how,

Unless he eats the orphan's rations up.

CASTELLANI. Haynau will sweat the suet off your bones

Before he's done with you.

BELLINI. Let's have him, then.

One, two, three, quick—the Austrian pill, my child.

CASTELLANI. "Inhabitants of Venice," he begins,

MANIN, AND THE

ACT II

BELLINI. I quarrel roundly with "inhabitants."
Why not "Venetians"? But "inhabitants,"
As folk who, though inhabiting a place,
Are alien to 't.

LUIGI. Will you let him read?

CASTELLANI. Here is the gist (*reading*): "Inhabitants of
Venice,
Let me to-day address you from my heart,
Not as a soldier, or a general
Who comes victorious to summon you,
But as a father——"

BELLINI. Hold, enough, enough!
I'll not acknowledge the relationship.

LUIGI. Body of Bacchus! Will he father us?

BELLINI. Ay, all of us, old scoundrel as he is.

LUIGI. Our parentage is more than dubious.

CASTELLANI. But will you let me read?

BELLINI. I would not miss
A ha'porth of this precious document
For all I have.

LUIGI. "For all you have," forsooth.
That would not purchase it; I would not miss it
To win that succulent and mighty dinner
My stomach craves in dreams.

FOSSOMBRONI. Proceed, proceed.

How does our loving parent write to us ?

CASTELLANI. A hasty sketch of the calamities

That Venice has to bear, since anarchy
And bloody revolution raised their heads.

"What have they brought you ?" cries His Eloquence

"Except distress, exhausted public funds,

And private ruin, this your noble city

Reduced to wreckage——"

BELLINI.

What ! so Haynau thinks

Our Venice is a crumbling heap of stones

Because their purblind gunners have let off

A hundred bombs or so ? If I were he

I'd hang them all for wretched marksmanship.

CASTELLANI. Meanwhile, with Venice in this ruined state,

Our forts have fallen.

BELLINI.

He means Malghera.

There was a token to remember us ;

One battery blown up ; and all the guns

Spiked, burst, or useless ; while upon our side

We did not lose a man in our retreat.

CASTELLANI. But listen, listen. (*Reading*) "It is imminent

That Venice soon must lie beneath the feet

Of my intrepid army ; then," says he,

"I'll come among you as a conqueror

MANIN, AND THE

ACT II

Exactng retribution ; I implore you
This last time only, to return again
To your allegiance ; I approach to-day
The sword in one hand truly, but I bear——”
Now what bears Haynau in the other hand ?

BELLINI. St. Peter's keys of heaven or of hell
To loose or bind us——

CASTELLANI. Wrong, though he conceives
His part in history as great, perhaps.

LUIGI. Were I his painter he should have a handful
Of scourges, gibbets, racks, and other truck
Belonging to his medieval tastes.

CASTELLANI. You'll never hit the bull's-eye ; Haynau bears
An olive branch !

(Prolonged laughter.)

BELLINI. Oh sacred sentiment !
An olive branch !

FOSSOMBRONI. Conceive him posturing,
With spotless draperies, hair filleted,
A messenger of peace.

LUIGI. But is there more ?

CASTELLANI. Ay, here he shows his devil's cloven hoof.
Surrender absolute is his demand,
The forts, the arsenals, the men-of-war,

SCENE II DEFENCE OF VENICE

The public treasury, the powder mills
To be delivered up, all private arms,
That not a gun or dagger may remain
To help Venetian hands.

BELLINI. He'd serve us then
As he serves Lombardy, where if a man
Should own a dagger, ay, a pocket-knife
Longer than regulation, he is seized
And, piff! paff! "he will trouble us no more!"

CASTELLANI. If that were all, a clean bullet shot,
We could forgive them, but they'd have us fawn
And lick their rods! They posted notices
In every street of Milan summoning
A loyal population to rejoice
Upon their Emperor's birthday; when a crowd
Free of their tongue—as all Italians are—
Hooted this notice, and gave utterance
To “Long live Italy!” they were dispersed
Before a charge of horse; some thirty fell
Prisoners to their hands, it mattered not
What was the case against them, they were flogged
For being Italian—there were women too,
Young, delicately nurtured—if they chanced
To be upon the street, going to and fro
Upon their private errands, they were seized

MANIN, AND THE

ACT II

And flogged before the Austrian officers
Half naked. By the God of love and truth,
They know the way to keep our hate alive !

BELLINI. Ay, do they ! They compelled the peasants here
Around Chioggia to work for them,
Throwing up trenches, while Venetian fire
Raked over them ; they held them digging there
A bayonet between their shoulder-blades.

LUIGI. Never shall Venice fall into their hands !

FOSSOMBRONI. Not while we live to hold a gun !

BELLINI. Nay, more,
If ammunition fails, as fail it may,
Not while we live to wield a bayonet.

CASTELLANI. Not while we live at all ; not while my hands
Can grip them by the throat, or my limbs drag me
To die upon their bayonets.

BELLINI. Well said !
Let our resolve be firm ; there's naught can be
Greater than that.

CASTELLANI. You mind me of a song
That Beppo used to sing.

LUIGI. Poor lad, he's gone !
He fell beside his gun at Malghera.

FOSSOMBRONI. He was a fellow of such gaiety
He could not choose but sing.

LUIGI. I saw him fall,
Shot through the body ; I went up to him
To give him water, scarce enough those days ;
And he had none. He smiled at me for that
And sang " Qui meurt pour la patrie a assez vécu,"
Until death stopped him.

BELLINI. What a many dead !
And all gone gallantly.

CASTELLANI. The luckier they !

BELLINI. Ah, but the women !

CASTELLANI. Do not speak of them.
My mother sits behind her darkened blind,
A soul in anguish, since my father died ;
And starts and swoons at every step without
Thinking it is my coffin that they bear ;
But yet I know she would not pray for peace
If it should spell surrender.

BELLINI. With such women
What deeds should men not rise to ?

MANIN, AND THE

ACT II

LUIGI.

Let us drink

To our Venetian women, not alone
The fairest, but the bravest of the world.

BELLINI (*calls*). Madame Costanza! Madam! Are you there,
Madame Costanza?

Enter MADAME COSTANZA from the café.

MDME. COST.

Do you call me, sir?

What do you want? There's nothing you can want
In this poor café, but some mouldy bread,
And that, God knows, you're welcome to.

BELLINI.

Some wine!

MDME. COST. Wine, say you? Wine? That is a jest of yours,
Signor Bellini ever was a droll;
But why not ask for pearls or frankincense,
They are as easy come by, on my faith,
For to the hospitals went all our wine.

BELLINI. What, every bottle?

MDME. COST.

Do you think us thieves

To keep it back, when once the President
Has given orders?

BELLINI.

Shrivel up my tongue

If I conceived it!

MDME. COST.

Let me go then, pray.

BELLINI. But wine we must have; we have made a vow

To drink the health of all Venetian women
Being fair, being gracious ; you we'll name the first,
Madame Costanza.

MDME. COST. (*going*). Bah ! I have no wine
To waste on women. Would that every five
Might make one man to fight the Austrians.

CASTELLANI. We'll drink to Venice, death to Austria,
Free and united Italy, with Rome
Triumphant in the midst.

MDME. COST. Why, drink to that,
And you shall have your wine. I'll bring it you !
 [*Exit MADAME COSTANZA.*]

LUIGI. My lips are parched to think upon that wine ;
I have not tasted it for many weeks.

FOSSOMBRONI. In spite of protests she had hidden some.
Aha ! these women.

Enter MADAME COSTANZA with bottle and glasses.

MDME. COST. Here it is, signori !

CASTELLANI. What shall we pay you, Madam ?

MDME. COST. Nothing, nothing.
It is a gift ; for, Signor Castellani,
I know you tried to save my husband's life ;
I owe you thanks for that. I kept this wine

MANIN, AND THE

ACT II

Thinking that if he came home wounded, sick,
It might restore him ; now that he is dead
Drink to his memory and to Italy.

(They all stand.)

BELLINI. I drink to him.

LUIGI.

And I.

FOSSOMBRONI *(drinking)*.

To Italy !

CASTELLANI *(drinking)*. To Italy and Rome.

ALL.

To Rome. To Rome !

Enter TOMMASEO.

TOMMASEO. Wine ? Merry-making ? Put your glasses down.
This is a day of dire calamity.
Rome, Rome has fallen.

CASTELLANI.

'Tis impossible !

TOMMASEO. Nay, Rome has fallen to the arms of France,
God's shame upon them.

BELLINI.

Is not France our friend ?

TOMMASEO. False friend. O Judas ! France despatched her
troops,
Thirty-five thousand under Oudinot
For Rome's defence.—Nay, they had bound themselves
By all the solemn treaties men can make

To force no government upon the city
She would not choose, and while they promised this
Laid siege to it, because the triumvirs
Would not admit that Papal anarchy
Once more within their walls,

CASTELLANI.

O fallen Rome !

TOMMASEO. Fallen indeed ; their walls are battered down,
And all their city open to the fire.
What deeds were done there, what heroic deeds,
But history can tell of ; fifty men
Would charge a thousand, ay, and beat them back,
Carry a villa with their bayonets,
And hold it till it was untenable ;
Then leave their bodies with a heap of slain
To testify their prowess. Years to come
There's not a single foot of Roman wall
But shall be hung with laurels to their name.

CASTELLANI. And how died Garibaldi ?

TOMMASEO.

He yet lives.

CASTELLANI. And is it possible that Rome should fall,
He living ?

TOMMASEO.

To all human agencies
There is an end of power. He has done
All that a man can do—more, more than man,

MANIN, AND THE

ACT II

But force of numbers overwhelms at last.
So, at the end, did Garibaldi call
Those who were living and unwounded yet,
Four thousand only, round him, and he said :
“ Hunger and thirst is all I offer you,
Earth for your bed, stars for your fireside,
Danger for your vocation, death at last,
And soon may last be ; but on those I call
Who never will despair of Italy.”
Forth from the city then they followed him,
To their uncertain fate.

CASTELLANI.

Despairing Rome,

Heart of the body that is Italy,
What mortal blow is this ? Shall foreigners
Possess these ancient and historic stones
Whence twice the Empire of the world arose ?
Shall they restore and strengthen tyranny,
That Pope, who, had he found it in his heart
Had been our saviour ; but who fled to join
The fiend of Naples ? Oh, beloved Rome,
What tragic fate is this ?

TOMMASEO.

Yet, yet I say

That her example makes her glorious,
And Rome is greater in the dust to-day
Than when she throned Augustus !

Enter VASSEUR and PEZZATO.

BELLINI. Mark you there!

Pezzato walking with the Frenchman now?

It shames my eye to witness such a sight.

(He and the other bandieri turn their backs on

VASSEUR, and affect not to see him.)

VASSEUR. Signor Tommaseo, I well perceive

You are no stranger to the day's sad news

That Rome has fallen to my countrymen.

I must believe that France is worthier

Than those who lead her to such acts as these;

But yet I blush to walk the streets of Venice

And know myself a Frenchman.

TOMMASEO. In your person

We honour all the nobler part of France,

Believing, though she may be led to wrong

By tricks and policy, her will inclines

Ever to generous actions.

VASSEUR. Yet, to-day

Venice is put to it to treat me kindly.

(To the bandieri at the table) Good-day, signori; is
your sight at fault

That you're unable to perceive a friend

This morning?

BELLINI. No, the sun was in my eyes.

MANIN, AND THE

ACT II

VASSEUR. Your hearing too is faulty ?

BELLINI. 'Tis the guns
Booming defiance to the world at large,
To Austria, to France.

VASSEUR (*going, to BELLINI, CASTELLANI, etc.*). The only
virtue you have yet to learn
Is charity ; you yet may practise that
When you are older. Come, Tommaseo !

Enter MANIN.

MANIN. Tommaseo, Pezzato, to my side !
This is a day of trial, a day of trial
For our Venetian temper.

TOMMASEO. Fallen Rome !
Our hearts are now in mourning.

MANIN. There is worse.
Each sorrow leads another by the hand.
Kossuth has been defeated ; all is lost,
Velago fallen to the Russian arms ;
And Austria, now free from 'tanglements,
Become more powerful than heretofore.
So Venice stands alone.

CASTELLANI (*leaping forward*). And she is proud
Thus to stand isolated from a world,
Traitorous, fawning——

PEZZATO. How long can she stand ?

MANIN. That is the question we must solve to-day.
What will the voice of the Assembly be,
Think you, Tommaseo ?

TOMMASEO. Unanimous !
I think they will admit of everything
Except surrender.

CASTELLANI. God be praised for it.

MANIN. Let Venice count the cost with gravity
Ere she cries " No surrender !" I have asked
Many a mighty sacrifice from her
Throughout these months of siege, but they will pale
Before the burdens I must now impose.
The city's rations must be much reduced
From this day onwards, and the strictest search
Made through the city, that no man may store
What should be common to Venetian needs.
Write out the proclamation, Andrio,
Another loan must forcibly be raised ;
Let every man give as his means allow.

CASTELLANI. I will give all I have ; put by my name
A hundred thousand francs, which I will raise
Somehow, God knows. My mother's jewels will go
Into the treasury ; she's held them safe,
As she has told me, for such need as this.
Shall we be niggard when our Venice begs ?

MANIN, AND THE

ACT II

TOMMASEO. Can I be backward where this boy will lead ?

You know me, Manin ; I am poor enough,
Save what my pen can earn, but I'll contrive
To raise you something.

MANIN.

Let us have your pen

Once more to pour its vitriolic stream
On cowards and on traitors ; and to flow
With love and sweetness to all noble hearts ;
Let it be fiery in our service now
To quicken laggards, stimulate the weak,
And wing our cause through Europe to the ears
Of all right-thinking men. Come, Niccolo,
One last, heart-moving protest at our fate
Perchance may yet find hearers.

TOMMASEO.

As you will.

Nothing that may be tried shall be untried.

MANIN. Pezzato, one more call for volunteers.

Although I think there's not a score of men
Able to carry arms who bear them not,
We shall have need of every single man,
Of every gun, of every piece of gold ;
More, more than need.

BELLINI.

So only we resist

There's not a wish we have ungratified.

MANIN. Go! To your posts! No lagging in the streets:
Haynau may take this opportunity
To try a bold attack, because despair
Has seized us at this news.

BELLINI. And let him try.
We do not rate him at a dozen straws.

MANIN. Go to your posts; go, go! It rests with you
To help uphold our honour.
[*Going with* PEZZATO, TOMMASEO, and VASSEUR.

BELLINI. To the death!

CASTELLANI (*bursts out singing*).
Sweet are the lips of love,
Found by the crescent moon,
When May-time's perfumed breath
Hangs o'er the dark lagoon.
But sweeter far, but sweeter far is death.

MANIN (*returning to listen*). What song is this?

PEZZATO. A ditty of the streets
And of the cafés, nothing more, indeed.

CASTELLANI (*sings*).
Fair is the morning sun,
Over the morning sea,
When every ripple saith
"I leap in liberty!"
But fairer far, but fairer far is death.

MANIN, AND THE

ACT II

Great are the Austrian arms,
What greater can there be,
Than cannon's thunderous voice,
And cholera's poisoned breath,
And flaming victory?

*[He leaps up, and the others fall in behind him. They
march out, singing in chorus:]*

But greater far, but greater far—is death!

*[Exeunt CASTELLANI, BELLINI, LUIGI, FOSSOM-
BRONI, and the other bandieri.]*

MANIN. But greater far, but greater far—is death!

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Great Council Hall of the Doge's Palace. A meeting of the Assembly. Present are* MANIN, TOMMASEO, SIRTORI, AVESANI, CAVEDALIS, GENERAL ULLOA, BALDISEROTTO, TORNIELLO, VARÉ, MINOTTO, PEZZATO (*who acts as secretary, taking down notes*), and others.

MANIN (*rising*). Read the report upon the city's health,
Sent by Duodo yesterday, Minotto.

MINOTTO (*rising, reads*). "The cholera continues to progress
In spite of all our efforts ; every day
There are a hundred deaths ; and still it spreads—
Augmented by these torrid August days—
Among a people packed in narrow spaces,
Living in cellars ; more than half of Venice
Being uninhabitable from the bombs.
Many, moreover, are exposed at night
To fever-laden mists from the lagoons
Stagnant with refuse ; and perforce being fed
On insufficient and unwholesome food

MANIN, AND THE

ACT III

Cannot resist disease. The hospitals
Are almost unsupplied with medicine,
Now the quinine, and other stores, obtained
By Monsieur Vasseur from Trieste, have failed.
We bring it to your notice with regret
That 'tis impossible to cope with this.
The sick and wounded in the hospitals
Receive but scant attention, lacking nurses,
Although Venetian women of all ranks
Proffer themselves with zeal, but few survive
Among the crowded and infected wards.
And, worse than this, we now lack means indeed
Even to bury decently our dead,
Since every able-bodied man in Venice
Has gone to carry arms."

(MINOTTO sits down. A silence ensues.)

MANIN. Now, Cavedalis, we'll hear your report.

CAVEDALIS. Sir, the municipality declare
That if you cannot let them have more hands
To man the pumps, that Venice must succumb,
Or be a heap of ashes ; yesterday
There were a dozen fires ; and with the city
Tinderous from the long-continued drought,
The flames spread rapidly ; the flying sparks
Impregnate what they light upon at once,

And all a quarter will burst out ablaze
In half an hour.

MANIN. I have ordered out
The civic guard to try and cope with this.

CAVEDALIS. Sir, with the onerous duties that they bear
I do not think the civic guard enough.
We must have ever at our call, relays
Day-time and night-time; when the enemy
Aim on the flag that shows our hospitals—
Such is their practice—we need many hands
To move the wounded from the crumbling walls,
And if their bursting bombs should set ablaze
The entire building, with our present means
We cannot carry out the sick in haste,
But many perish.

TOMMASEO. We must detail then
What soldiers we can spare, and urgently
Call on the city yet for volunteers.

MANIN. Pincherle, your report on our finance——

PINCHERLE. Is as ill-favoured as the other two
We have heard read. For all the Government
Has practised strenuous economy,
We are involved most deeply; we must needs
Make a provision for the hospitals——

MANIN, AND THE

ACT III

A burden which increases every day—
And the incessant hail of bombs we suffer
Reduces many noble streets and squares
To utter ruin ; buildings must be shored,
And débris cleared ; moreover, we must meet
The Army loan, it were a shame indeed
If Venice paid not those who fought for her.
We beg, in view of these contingencies,
A further loan of seven million lire
Be raised upon all real estate in Venice.

TOMMASEO. Let it be voted. This heroic people
Will raise it cheerfully as heretofore.

AVESANI. Ay, if they can ; but they are alchemists
Who can transmute base metal into gold.
Venice is bankrupt of all valuables—
They came into the treasury long since—
And at our last appeal when Rome was crushed
Everything in the city was subscribed ;
The rich gave gold and silver as they could—
Though many families are destitute
That carry ancient and distinguished names—
The poor their earnings and their little treasures ;
The women even gave the silver pins
That fasten up their hair on holidays.
But more, they stripped their houses to supply

DEFENCE OF VENICE

Metal for castings; churches gave their bells
To turn to cannon balls for Austria.
I have seen families unroof their homes
To give the lead for bullets.

VARÉ. They will do
What they have done before ; another effort
And Venice must be free.

TOMMASEO.

Come, colleagues all,
I pray you let this vote be carried through.
This city is the home of miracles,
For love o'erleaps the bounds of common sense,
And snatches the impossible from fate.
At the last levy in the treasury
They found a wedding-ring—a poor girl's gift
Whose lover and betrothed was lying dead
Among the ruined stones of Malghera.
“’Tis all I have of him who should have been
My husband,” said she, “him I did not grudge.
Shall I grudge this if Venice has the need?”

MANIN. We will submit to further burdens yet
If needs be; but we are upon the eve
Of greater evils.

SIRTORI. What can greater be?

MANIN. The day is close when Venice will want bread.

MANIN, AND THE

ACT III

SIRTORI. Heroic Venice then will eat the stones.

TOMMASEO. Brava ! Think thus, act thus, we cannot fail !

MANIN. War ! Famine ! Pestilence ! The threefold scourge
That an unhappy people can endure
Venice endures now ; ay, and will not flinch
As we who know her know. But we, her leaders,
Shall we be blind for her ? Put by your hopes
And see facts only. Hunger may be borne,
But hunger is invincible at last.
The last loaf eaten, the last shot discharged,
We must surrender at discretion ; then
Will Austria approach with fire and sword,
And Venice be apportioned that same fate
That Brescia suffered.

TOMMASEO. No, impossible !
Heaven itself must thunder negatives !

MANIN. Consider, at this moment of supreme
And deadly peril, you were singled out ;
And yours is the responsibility
To act with wisdom. Venice is alone ;
Since Austria reconquered Hungary
She is omnipotent in Southern Europe ;
And France and England stand away from us—
Rightly or wrongly, God must judge of them

SCENE I

DEFENCE OF VENICE

Upon some future day—and frankly now
They recommend we make what terms we can.

SIRTORI. Have we not tried to wring such terms from them ?

MANIN. You do mistake the purport of my words ;
We have negotiated heretofore
For certain privileges. Understand
If we can but insure the life and limb
Of our Venetians, we must be content
To give the city up.

AVESANI. Oh, shame on you !
Shame on you, Manin ! At your coward words
I do protest.

MINOTTO. And I.

TORNIELLO. With all my strength.

SIRTORI. Surrender Venice ! All these many months
No heart has whispered that ; 'tis left for you
To give that dastard utterance to the ear ;
Our President, the captain of our ship !

MANIN. Listen, Sirtori ; while there was hope,
Ay, but the shadow of hope—you know
I could not bring my tongue to such a word.
There is no hope.

VARÉ. The fleet must put to sea,
And so provision us ; while we have food

MANIN, AND THE

ACT III

Venice among her network of lagoons
Is still impregnable.

TORNIELLO. Do not forget,
We must not leave an avenue untried.

MANIN. Baldisserotto, give us your report.

BALDIS. The fleet is insufficient for our needs,
And even should they break the strict blockade—
Which scarcely I think possible—and sail,
They'd be unable to provision us
In time.

SIRTORI. Yet does it seem a shameful thing
That they should lie inactive out to sea,
When we have need ; let them but strike a blow
For honour and for Venice.

BALDIS. Would they might.
But there malaria and cholera
Have raged so fiercely that but thirty men
Remain of every hundred.

VARE. I advise
That if the fleet be useless, all our troops,
Soldiers and volunteers and civic guard,
Should make a sortie, never more return
Alive, save with provisions for a year.

ULLOA. Pray you, believe; the enemy's blockade
Is very strict; though we should win through them,
We should not find provisions; all the land
For miles around is barren to our wants.
Sirtori's brilliant expedition won
An Austrian flag to hang up in St. Mark's,
And honour to its leader, but no food
To cheer a hundred thousand starving souls
Were there the chance a sortie would succeed,
Though half our lives were paid to purchase it,
I yet should hold it cheap.

MANIN. Will you believe
These words are uttered not without due weight,
They do not lightly come from off my tongue—
Surely you know how heavily!—for weeks
I've played the coward; though conviction grew
That all was over, I have smothered it
Deep in my heart. My people do complain
I have not spoken to them, but I dared not.
I was a coward, dared not say to them
That Venice must surrender; but at least
I'd not deceive them, trick them, lie to them.
No man shall ever tell me that I lied.

TORNIELLO. Be but courageous also, President!
Go to St. Mark's; call out for volunteers,

MANIN, AND THE

ACT III

And let the population rise in arms
To make a general sortie. I believe
Success must crown us.

MANIN.

No; I say.

TORNIELLO.

At least,

We shall die fighting, as befits our race.

MANIN. Oh, were it but a question how to die,
I would thank God for it; that were a gift
Worthy His hands, for this poor life of ours
Has never sat upon me easily,
At any time since I have been a man
I had been glad to put the burden by;
How much more now! I pray you, pardon me
That I should speak about myself to-day.
Hear me with patience! You would have us make
A sortie, and by doing so expose
Women and children, wounded, sick, and old
To capture by the sword and bayonet.
You cannot think that such an enemy
Would hold their hand from mercy?

ULLOA.

It is clear

A general sortie is a general folly.

MANIN. I summon the Assembly to my aid
To face this crisis. Give me loyally
Your firm endeavour, now there is most need

DEFENCE OF VENICE

TORNIELLO. We resist !

MANIN. Pray let me finish—while the other course,
Is to endeavour while there yet is time
To make what terms we can with Austria.

VARÉ. The terms of our surrender ?

TORNIELLO. Never ! never !

AVESANI. Manin, we must decide for liberty.

SIRTORI. You counsel it?

MANIN. I do.

SIRTORI. Against your conscience, then.

MANIN. Not so !

Against my heart, my friends, my countrymen,
My hopes, my passionate convictions, prayers,
Against my will, my body, and my soul—
But not against my conscience.

MANIN, AND THE

ACT III

TORNIELLO. Be again
The man of March, who in the teeth of Europe
Flung his defiance.

MANIN. Oh for March again,
When there was hope of succour ! Now we know
There's none in Europe will stretch out a hand
To save us from the pit.

TORNIELLO. Oh God ! oh God !
I vote against surrender ; better death
Than this dishonour.

MANIN. Ere you vote, a word.
If you decide—I pray you will not so—
That you will still resist, you must elect
Three triumvirs on my retirement.
I would propose to you Tommaseo,
Sirtori, Avesani.

TOMMASEO. I refuse.
We must have one man at the head of us
In this momentous crisis.

AVESANI. That man, you !
You know that your retirement will loose
The last and bitterest of agonies
Upon deserted Venice—civil war.

MANIN. Pray let Sirtori be your President.

TOMMASEO. You will desert us ?

MANIN. Not while there is work

That I can do. If Venice will resist
She must have leaders with the power to hope—
Hope against certainties, against despair ;
Hope for a miracle, the circling stars
Put back upon their courses ; some there be
Who have that power. They must govern you.

TOMMASEO. How would you counsel us ?

MANIN. While yet is time

Let us attempt to wring an amnesty
For all in Venice from the Austrians.

TOMMASEO. They will not grant it us. You do not think,
After the long resistance we have made,
They will exact no punishment at all ?

MANIN. What ! shall it weigh with us the penalties
That *we* must suffer, being privileged
As guides of Venice ? Let them but insure
Safety to all the souls within our walls,
And they must deal with us as pleases them.
But let us keep a semblance of respect,
Order, and dignity. Shall Venice see
Street rioting, and men become like beasts—
The butcheries of Naples and Milan,

MANIN, AND THE

ACT III

The dreadful and humiliating doom
Of tragic Brescia? If you decree
That Venice shall resist at any cost,
How will you answer when the people cry
For food beneath your windows? Will you hide
Your eyes from terrible, unnatural deeds
A famine-stricken city witnesses?
Has none of you envisaged in his dreams
Venice, like ancient Carthage, on the pyre
Of her own greatness, sink in fire and blood
Out of the world, and future history
Seek for the place where once that greatness was?

TORNIELLO. How long can Venice hold?

MANIN.

If I should name

The day when food must fail, perchance the news
Might come to Haynau's spies, and do us harm;
But you, Tommaseo, know all too well,
And you, Sirtori, that that day is close.

TOMMASEO. Believe me, colleagues all, the President

Had never placed this sad alternative
Before us were there anything untried.
We keep him on the rack to question him
These weary hours. He has governed us
Patiently, bravely, wisely, many months,

DEFENCE OF VENICE

And he will guide us wisely to the end.
I loyally support him.

MANIN. Thank you for it.

TOMMASEO. I therefore counsel we commend ourselves
 Into his keeping unreservedly,
 To act as he thinks fit.

TORNIELLO. No! no! no! no!
To put ourselves into the hands of Manin
Speaks of capitulation.

SIRTORI. I predict
A riot in the streets when it is known
Manin no longer has the confidence
Of all the people, and the army greatly
Is disaffected to him.

MANIN. True it is
That once I did enjoy their confidence ;
And now no more. I stood to Venice then
For freedom ; if I fed them full of lies
I still could have their love. I will not do it.
But strictest order in the city's walls
I can and will insure. I summon you,
Venetians all, if ever you have loved
The Venice of our dreams, that shall be free,
That shall be great, and honoured, help me now
To save this broken Venice from the sword,

MANIN, AND THE

ACT III

To steer this gallant and despairing people
Into a haven, though against their wills ;
I ask you to put by your prejudice,
Your personal convictions, wishes, hopes ;
Act loyally with me on these last days,
That our republic write across its page
A worthy "Finis."

THE ASSEMBLY (*rising as one man*). You have our support.

MANIN. There speaks Italy ! Assure me now,
That you will not oppose by word or deed
Whatever I may do.

TOMMASEO. We've given you
Power of life and death on all of us,
And over Venice.

MANIN. He who trusts me not
Declare himself. I must have confidence,
Absolute and unanswering, from this hour.
Speak now who will.

(*A silence.*)

TORNIELLO. We are in your hands now,
Though I had thought to die before this day.

SIRTORI. What would you have us do ?

MANIN. But one thing more.
It never shall be said our Government

Countenanced violence, or rendered up
The Keys of Venice to a tyrant force.
Let the Assembly therefore be prorogued
To God's own future ; and our tattered power
Given to private persons to deliver
Over to Austria ; let choice be made,
And the municipality alone
Open negotiations.

AVESANI.

Let it be

As you have said. Here shall we meet no more.
Farewell, O noble and historic hall,
Home of our ancient greatness, present pain ;
Here was the great Republic of the Seas,
Which now is fallen.

MANIN.

Farewell to you all.

Words fail me.

TOMMASEO.

Stay a moment ere we part.

Do we not owe a single word of thanks
To this our President, who through such trials
As would have riven any weaker soul
Led us with firmness and with dignity,
With courage and with patience, though a prey
To heavy sickness, and oppressed with griefs
Public and private. Shall we let him go

MANIN, AND THE

ACT III

Thoughtlessly, he who never had a thought
Towards himself ?

(They press round MANIN to shake his hand.)

MANIN. I pray you, all my friends,
A little respite. I have battled you
For six long hours, and having won at last
This saddest victory, I cannot bear
Even your kindness.

SIRTORI. Come, then, let us go.
Farewell, dear President.

AVESANI. Farewell, farewell.
God be with you.

CAVEDALIS. We shall not meet again
Ere exile parts us.

[Exeunt all, slowly, in silence, with sad faces.]

MANIN and PEZZATO remain.

MANIN. Are they gone at last ?
Then shut the door, then shut the door, I say !
This is the end of all my people's love ;
My people's heroism, sacrifice,
Their faith, devotion, courage ; here's the end.

PEZZATO. Yet worthily you've played your part to save
Venice for that yet uncomputed hour
That sets her free again.

SCENE I

DEFENCE OF VENICE

MANIN.

I shall not see it.

I shall be blind beneath my coffin lid
There in a foreign land ; I shall not see
The glory and the splendour of St. Mark's
When our Italian flag salutes the sun ;
I shall be deaf, and never hear the peal
Of our triumphant bells, and volleying guns ;
I shall be dumb, I shall be dumb that day,
And never say " My people, for this hour
I saved you when I sacrificed you most."
Lost Venice, lost to me for evermore !

Re-enter AVESANI.

AVESANI. The people clamour for you on St. Mark's
To know the sad decision of the day ;
I fear they never will be satisfied
Save with your voice to calm them.

MANIN.

I will come.

PEZZATO. I fear your breaking health ; I pray you rest.

MANIN. It is my people need me ; who but I
Should tell them of the doom we have prepared.
This is the bitterest hour of all my life ;
Comes there a bitterer ?

[Exit MANIN, with PEZZATO and AVESANI.]

MANIN, AND THE

ACT III

SCENE 2.—MANIN'S balcony outside the Doge's Palace, looking over St. Mark's. Below the Piazza is densely packed, and among the crowd may be discovered CASTELLANI, LUIGI, BELLINI, and other bandieri; MADAME COSTANZA; GROSSI, and other gondoliers. The crowd sways and mutters excitedly; there are occasional shouts of "Manin!" "Death to traitors!" "No surrender!" As MANIN steps on to his balcony, followed by PEZZATO, there is a great silence.

MANIN. My people!

You know if I have well and truly loved
This Venice of our hopes. Since those first days
When we cast off the yoke of Austria,
And life became a splendid festival
For every generous and Italian heart;
And through those heavy days when clouds arose,
Obscuring single issues, noble aims,
And every morning saw another thread
Added to yesterday's still-tangled warp;
And further, when disaster broke on us
As through a bursting dam, and overwhelmed
Piedmont, and Lombardy, and Sicily,
Naples and Rome, and only Venice stood
Above the wreck of hopes; down to these days
Of gallant struggles in the teeth of fate,

Have you been ever absent from my thoughts,
My people ?

GROSSI. Never ; do we doubt your love ?

MANIN. How often from this very balcony
Have I addressed you ; in our hours of joy
And hours of sorrow ? Gladly I have spoken
Words of encouragement and cheerfulness
When such there could be ; many words of hope,
Stern words to stiffen or subdue your hearts—
But have I ever spoken lying words ?
(A unanimous cry of "Never ! never !")

MANIN. Have I ever said,
"There's help from Piedmont," when I knew too well
No help could come from her ; or fed your hearts
On lying rumours or deceitful hopes,
By diplomatic sentences, stuffed out
With nods and winks, to ape what they were not ?
Stand forth, if any there may be who claim
I led them on with lying promises.

CASTELLANI. There can be none !

MANIN. What I have promised you
Was steel, and shot, and scarcity of bread,
Disease and suffering, and, at the last,
Possible failure ; these to be endured

ACT III

CASTELLANI. Not while I live to prove that word a lie!

MANIN. The word has come to me
That I no longer have your love and trust
As formerly I had. Your love is yours,
To give or to withhold ; but I demand
Absolute confidence in this supreme
And deadly crisis.

ANOTHER. We trust you with our lives!

MANIN. Then I, who never yet have lied to you,
Then I, who love you—think upon my love,
O sons and daughters of my heart!—declare
We must surrender Venice.
(*The crowd is violently agitated. Cries of "No! No! No!"*)

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TONDELLI (*leaping on to a barrow, begins to address the crowd*).

Shall we play the ass ?

And having flung defiance in the teeth
Of gathered Europe, meekly get us back
And tuck our tail between the galling shafts
Of Austria's waggon ; shall we hale for them,
And be their beast of burden ?

GROSSI.

No, by God !

TONDELLI. No, no, I say ; if all the Governments
Of Europe cannot force us, shall our own
Humiliate us ? Let us pack them out
Ere they can ruin us.

MANIN.

This is enough.

I will have order ; and your Government
Shall be respected and obeyed.

TONDELLI.

You hear ?

These men will ruin us, will give us up
To Austria.

CASTELLANI.

Oh, father, must this be ?

MANIN. What, will you starve ?

CASTELLANI.

Ay, better starve and die !

BELLINI. When we have eaten all there is to eat,
Then let the Croats devour us ; their meal
Will be the fuller.

MANIN, AND THE

ACT III

TONDELLI.

Rather let us summon

Every Venetian who can carry arms,
On pain of death, upon a certain day
To meet upon this square: then would we make
A general sortie to provision Venice.

MANIN. I will not have a general sortie made;

It is a folly that would put a blot
Upon our history. 'Twould leave your streets,
Your sick, your helpless, open to the arms
Of Austria. No more of this, I say.
Your representatives—by you elected—
Have voted on this matter, 'tis for you
To follow where they lead you.

TONDELLI.

Traitors all!

MANIN. One traitor only worthy of the name

There is in Venice now, the man who puts
His private aims before the public good.
Will you have anarchy within your walls,
Rioting, lawlessness and civil war,
Those arms you bear diverted from their use
To kill each other? I will never live
To see this thing; drive out the turbulent,
Before the yeasty workings of their speech
Has bubbled up your brain.

(*To TONDELLI*) Tondelli, go;
Withdraw yourself, be silent, ere the law
Shall take its course against you.

TONDELLI.

Here I stay.

MANIN. Calucci! Salviani! I command you,
As members still of the Venetian guard,
Arrest this man.

A GONDOLIER.

This smells of tyranny.

ANOTHER. Tondelli's harm is in the boundless love
He has for Venice.

TONDELLI.

What, is this our freedom?
That one man should compel us in the way
That thousands would not follow; in our hands
Lies our resistance or surrendering.
We're braver than our leaders, what *they* gain
By this dishonour is but known to them,
But *we* gain whips and bullets.

CASTELLANI.

Does he dare
To cry aloud these slanders on the streets,
And yet not fear he will be rent in pieces,
By anger justly roused? Who'll stop his mouth

MANIN, AND THE

ACT III

Ere he will poison us with this discharge
Of filthy lies ?

*(The crowd is swayed backwards and forwards as they
are moved by the different speeches. CASTEL-
LANI'S words turn the tide, and a rush is made
towards TONDELLI.)*

GROSSI.

Come, pass the fellow here.

ANOTHER. We'll handle him.

MANIN.

Stop ! Silence all of you

In the name of the Republic ! Salviani,
Arrest that man as I commanded you.
Tondelli, go with him, and learn to know
That freedom stands broad-based upon the rock
Of law ; be that foundation undermined
The edifice will fall upon your ears.
Shall history find us worthy to be free,
Who, when we most should act in concert, fall
To fight like beasts, and to dispute like children ?
Shall Austria not fling the challenge out
That she must rule us, since we cannot learn
To rule ourselves ? Go ! Go !

[Exit TONDELLI with SALVIANI and CALUCCI.]

For all of you,
Learn to deserve. Although we must surrender,
Remember that we are a nation still,

DEFENCE OF VENICE

CASTELLANI. Forgive us, Manin,
That we have grieved you with our turbulence.
You know how bitter this surrender is.

MANIN. I cannot lie to you.

ANOTHER. Oh, save us, Manin !

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MANIN, AND THE

ACT III

That they may serve their splendid Italy.
And those most noble women, mothers, wives,
Who in their hearts bear all the bitter wounds
That steel and bullets can inflict upon
Belovèd bodies. Women of our race,
Makers of heroes ; you are witnesses
That Venice never can endure the yoke—
The face of spies behind our window-panes,
Their foot upon our threshold, sacred now
With memory of suffering.

GROSSI.

Enough !

This hour chokes me.

CASTELLANI (*flinging himself on the steps of St. Mark, and kissing them*).

I salute your stones,

Beloved Venice, while they yet are free.

MANIN. Of this one thing be sure. A little time,
A little hour, in the span of years
That history devours, we submit
To bow before the flail of tyranny ;
Ay, it may strike us down, and we may die
With Europe passive round our Calvary ;
Yet that for which we stand, for liberty,
For equal justice, and the right of laws
Purely administered, can never die,

Being of the nature of eternity ;
Nor all the blood that Austria has shed
Mar the indelibility of truth ;
Nor all the graves that Austria has dug
Bury it deep enough ; nor all the lies
That coward lips have bandied to and fro,
And coward hearts received to trick themselves
Smother the face of it. Now in the world
Comparison seems extinct, and I believe
That in the ages we call barbarous
There had been nobler and more generous hearts
That would have risen to cry " Halt ! Enough !"
And yet we must rejoice at this our fate ;
If we should die, rejoice ! If we should suffer
Be thankful ! For we are more fortunate,
Being a nation tragically stricken,
Than those the world hails prosperous. For them,
Peace is the slavery of peoples ; right,
The driving circumstance of worldly gain,
No more, the sacrifice of liberty,
Of us who have deserved it, is to them
A hard political necessity.
Have faith ; remember also that we stand
The champion of God. We stand for right,
We stand for justice ! Let the present be
What it must be ; the future is for us.

MANIN, AND THE

ACT III

CASTELLANI. I will forget the face of her who bore me
Before these words of yours.

MANIN. To your own hands
I do commend this page of history;
Let the last acts of our Republic be
Worthy of all.

LUIGI. Be sure we'll do your will.

CASTELLANI. I never thought to let my musket fall
While I had power to hold it.

ANOTHER. Oh, come down
And walk among us once as heretofore,
Ere we must lose you.

ANOTHER. Will you leave us, Manin?
While you are with us, worst can never come.

MANIN. Alas! you do but whet my sorrow's edge
With this your confidence. You can no more
Rely upon my strength and wisdom now,
But on my deep, imperishable love
Lean all your weight, my love can never fail.
(He staggers back, with a hand at his heart.)
Ah! Hold me up, Pezzato, hold me up,

SCENE II

DEFENCE OF VENICE

It is the old pain on me. Such a people!
That such a people have to fall again
Under the yoke of tyranny. Oh, God!
That such a people——

(He leans on PEZZATO, half fainting.)

GROSSI. Is he dying?

CASTELLANI. No!

Put out the sun ere that.

BELLINI. He moves again.

MANIN *(recovering)*. Give me my sword! form up the civic guard.

We will patrol the streets, and demonstrate
We are a nation yet, though sorely stricken.
Citizen soldiers, to your ranks once more,
That I may lead you.

(The civic guard forms up in the square below.)

(Leaving the balcony, aside to PEZZATO) Good-bye,
Andrio.

If I should find a bullet, it were well,
My work being finished here.

PEZZATO. How can you grieve me
With cruel words upon this cruel hour?

MANIN, AND THE

ACT III

MANIN. So you do grudge me such a small reward
After long labour?

*[He leaves the balcony, and descending to the Piazza,
puts himself at the head of the civic guard, and
marches out before them with a firm step.]*

ACT IV.

SCENE.—*A room in MANIN's house in San Paternan. The room is in great confusion ; stripped of its belongings, which are being packed in big cases by ANITA, the servant. During the whole scene she moves to and fro on her domestic errands. MANIN sits with his arms resting on a small table, and his face hidden in his hands. TERESA MANIN stands sadly regarding him. She turns as the door opens and TOMMASEO enters, and lays her finger on her lips.*

TOMMASEO (*softly*). How is it with him ?

TERESA. As you see him now ;
He has not moved or spoken many hours.

TOMMASEO. You cannot rouse him ?

TERESA. Once Emilia called,
Speaking his name ; that seemed to break his trance
With memory of the many bitter times
She's cried to him for help ; he raised his head
To ask if she were ill ; when she replied,

MANIN, AND THE

ACT IV

"No, well," he let it sink again, and said,
"Then all is well that can be."

TOMMASEO. Can this be?

Our Daniel Manin, who with lion heart,
And courage more than mortal, has endured
Trials, labours, sufferings, anxieties,
With an undaunted forehead raised to Fate?

TERESA. He did not fail while there was work for him.
Through all the dreary days while Austria
Haggled about our terms, he did not cease
In courage or in vigilance; he left
Nothing undone that might be thought or done
For Venice. Now the documents are signed
I think his heart is broken.

TOMMASEO. Love of God!

Yet have I one more burden for this heart
Already laden; 'tis a friendly tongue
That must inflict a wound.

*(He goes to MANIN and places his hand on his
shoulder.)*

How are you, Daniel?

MANIN. Why, well enough. What do you want of me?

TOMMASEO. Your ancient courage.

MANIN. Courage once I had

When Venice needed it; being helpless now

To share the burden that I could not save,
I have less courage than the lowest wretch
Who quakes to face the day.

TOMMASEO. I'll not believe
The greatness of your heart can fall below
The name of Manin.

MANIN (*starting up*). What! There's something yet
For me to do?

TOMMASEO. To bear.

MANIN. Then let me hear it.

TOMMASEO. Your friend Pezzato——

MANIN. What of him?

TOMMASEO. —is dead.

TERESA. Alas, Andrio! Counsellor and friend,
In losing you we lose the little saved
From our lives' shipwreck, we are bankrupt now.

TOMMASEO. His death was sudden.

TERESA. Was it cholera?

TOMMASEO. A seizure of the heart.

MANIN. Oh, jest of Fate!
This death for years has stood behind my back
Threatening me, when I could welcome it

MANIN, AND THE

ACT IV

It strikes across my shoulder at my friend,
He is more fortunate than I at least.

TOMMASEO. He neither moved nor spoke before his death.

MANIN. How all the little trivial sentences
We uttered yesterday loom ponderous,
Being sealed by death to everlasting silence.

TOMMASEO. His bones shall rest in our Venetian ground,
His soul have peace.

MANIN. No peace for soul of his,
While Austrian spurs go ringing on our stones.
Oh, Venice! Venice! Andrio, my friend,
I did not think I had a private grief
To spare from Venice, but there was a pang
Unwring from me, before I heard this news.

TERESA. See, you have killed him. Husband! Love!
Look up.
Out of my sight, false friend, false Niccolo;
Why must you kill us with this bitter news?
Would not a friend be silent?

MANIN (*recovering himself*). Pray you all,
Let us be calm; sit by me, Niccolo;
Tell me about my people. Since the terms

Were ratified at Papadopoli
I have not stirred ; this house has been my tomb,
And I, deaf, blind, and silent as the dead,
Bitterly envious to copy them ;
But now you, like a good physician, come
And sting me back to life. Of Venice, then,
Tell me. All's quiet ? There are no revolts,
No factions, no disorders ? Gallant city,
Mute when no more her guns can thunder speech.

TOMMASEO. To-day the city is an eyeless ghost
Of former greatness ; every door is fast
And every shutter closed ; the streets are silent,
No loiterers by bridges or by squares ;
No sound of voices ; should one laugh aloud
I think the stones would fall with the report,
And Haynau's troops will march through desert streets
As Venice were a city of the dead.

MANIN. And how should it be otherwise indeed ?
Let nothing mar our harmony of grief,
So shall we fall as falls a noble tree,
With all our summer bravery a-bloom
Not sapless, and already half consumed
With rot of civil strife ; there's more to do
To make a people than die gallantly.

TOMMASEO. To live well.

MANIN, AND THE

ACT IV

MANIN. And how live our people now ?

TOMMASEO. Still famine-stricken, scourged by fell disease,
But sorrowing for Italy and you
More than themselves.

MANIN. Can this you say be true ?
I think that they must come to hate my name,
For I have led them through a year of siege
With its inevitable suffering,
And led them but to failure. This day's sun
Sees Austria triumphant in our midst,
Recalled by me. Have not you heard that said ?

TOMMASEO. Come to the window. Open it. Look down ;
What do you see ?

MANIN. I see a pallid crowd
In mourning garments, go, with heavy steps,
Before my house.

TOMMASEO. You know not what they say.
They whisper to each other as they pass,
" It is behind those walls our father lives—
Manin, who suffers for us."

MANIN. Oh, my people !

TOMMASEO. And as they pass they kiss your doorstep, Manin.

MANIN. In hearts like these there is no room for evil.

Enter DATAICO MEDIN, ushered in by ANITA.

MEDIN. Citizen Manin, lately President
Of our Republic, I am sent to-day,
Mouthpiece of that municipality
To which the powers of Venice were resigned.

MANIN. I praise you that you have kept civil war
From this sad city.

MEDIN. All that Venice is
She is but by your guidance, you the brain
And spirit of our State. Do we forget
The sacrifices you have made for us,
And how you go forth into exile now—
Barren of goods, and in your middle age—
To start a life's work as though young again?

MANIN. So that I carry Venice's love with me
I will not count me poor.

MEDIN. We know our act
Is what the voice of Venice would declare.
We therefore humbly beg you to accept
This twenty thousand lire, being all we have
After our liabilities are met.

MANIN. Shall I take charity of public funds?
This money might be put to other use.

MANIN, AND THE

ACT IV

MEDIN. The one unkindly act of all your life
Will be to cast our gift upon our hands.
Hear, I beseech you, what my colleagues say ;
Too well they know the grandeur of your soul—
So runs their message—for a doubt to rise
That you would misconstrue this act of theirs,
Remembering there's nothing we can give
To ever nullify our debt to you.
But when, to sweeten weary days and nights
You spend in exile, you recall the time
Your firmness and your courage saved the State,
Remember also that your Venice keeps—
And ever will keep, while her name remains—
Gratitude and remembrance.

MANIN. No more words !
I cannot thank you, I am stricken dumb ;
My heart is like an over-freighted ship,
And words will sink it.

*Enter TERESA and EMILIA, followed by GIORGIO ; they are carrying
some bread and a jug of water, which they put down on the table.*

TERESA. I beseech you, friends,
Honour my table ; gather round my board
For this last time ; I shall be glad no more,
Woman-like, to give hospitality

To those who call my husband friend. Sit down,
Divide our portion of Venetian bread,
Ere we must taste the bread which Dante found
So bitter, and go up and down the stairs
Of foreigners and strangers. Niccolo!
Come on my right hand. Sir, sit down with us.
Poor is our meal, but we have grown so used
To meagre rations, all these many months,
We shall revolt from French devices now.
Daniel, my husband, this is still your home,
These are your guests; divide the bread for them.

EMILIA. Oh, every crumb is more than gold to me,
Being the last of Venice I shall eat.

MANIN. There should have been one more beside the board
For this sad sacrament. I miss his face.

Enter VASSEUR.

VASSEUR. I come to fetch you, Manin, to embark.

EMILIA. Not yet the time!

VASSEUR. Ay, time and past it is.

You would not see the glint of foreign steel
Upon St. Mark's? They enter even now.

MANIN. And we are ready. (*To MEDIN*) Let me take your
hand.

MANIN, AND THE

ACT IV

Thank Venice for me ; though my words are cold,
There's fire at my heart. She has been loyal
Above my hopes, more generous than my thoughts,
Silent as truth, magnanimous as God.
I will not cease to think upon her days,
And all her glory. Let my people be
What they have been. Say also—nay, no more ;
They know what I would say ; for winglessly
Do crawl my words. I love them, that is all.
Say nothing further. (*To VASSEUR*) I am ready, friend.

ANITA. Good-bye, my master and my mistress ; never
Will I be glad until you do return.

MANIN. Come, my children ; my Teresa, come.

TERESA. Italy, my Italy !

Home of my heart, and cradle of my race,
Dearer a span of you than all lands else.
Gem of the world—oh, more than gems to me,
Heart's blood and life's breath. Italy, farewell.
I am but dead, though I am living yet,
Because mine eyes no more behold your sun ;
I am but dead, I am but dead, my land,
Being severed from you, I have no more life
Except what throbs and aches in memory
To hear no more the beautiful soft sound
Of our Italian speech. I turn my face

Towards a stranger land ; I turn my tongue
Towards a stranger speech, my Italy !
Can day bring anything except despair,
Knowing the sun we look on looks upon
The cities and the plains of Lombardy ?
And with the night an icy anguish falls
Upon the exiled spirit, sick for home ;
For home and Venice—oh, belovèd city,
Be still the sentinel of liberty ;
Be still the beacon to our century ;
Be still unconquered, even though in bonds.

TOMMASEO. Oh, child of Italy, your barbèd words
Pierce to the heart ; I pray you hold your peace
Ere you undo our manhood.

TERESA. I have finished,
Dumb from henceforward ; I put off from me
The hot intemperate power of tragic words—
Daniel, my husband, take me by the hand ;
We go forth out of Paradise, accursed
Like Eve and Adam. Oh, my children, come.

VASSEUR. Give me some word before you go, my friend ;
To store against your absence, lacking you,
I still may hold the gospel of your truth.

MANIN. I am no prophet of inspired words.
One talent only I received at birth,

ACT IV

VASSEUR. God be with you all.

Think of us on your wedding-day, Anita.

TOMMASEO. We yet do live

TERESA. My heart makes pilgrimage, O Italy,
Throughout your length and breadth, from these high
Alps,

MANIN. Farewell, farewell.

Come; o' God's name, we do augment our pain
By words and waiting. Grief is blind, indeed,
Save with the inward eye that sees itself,

ACT IV

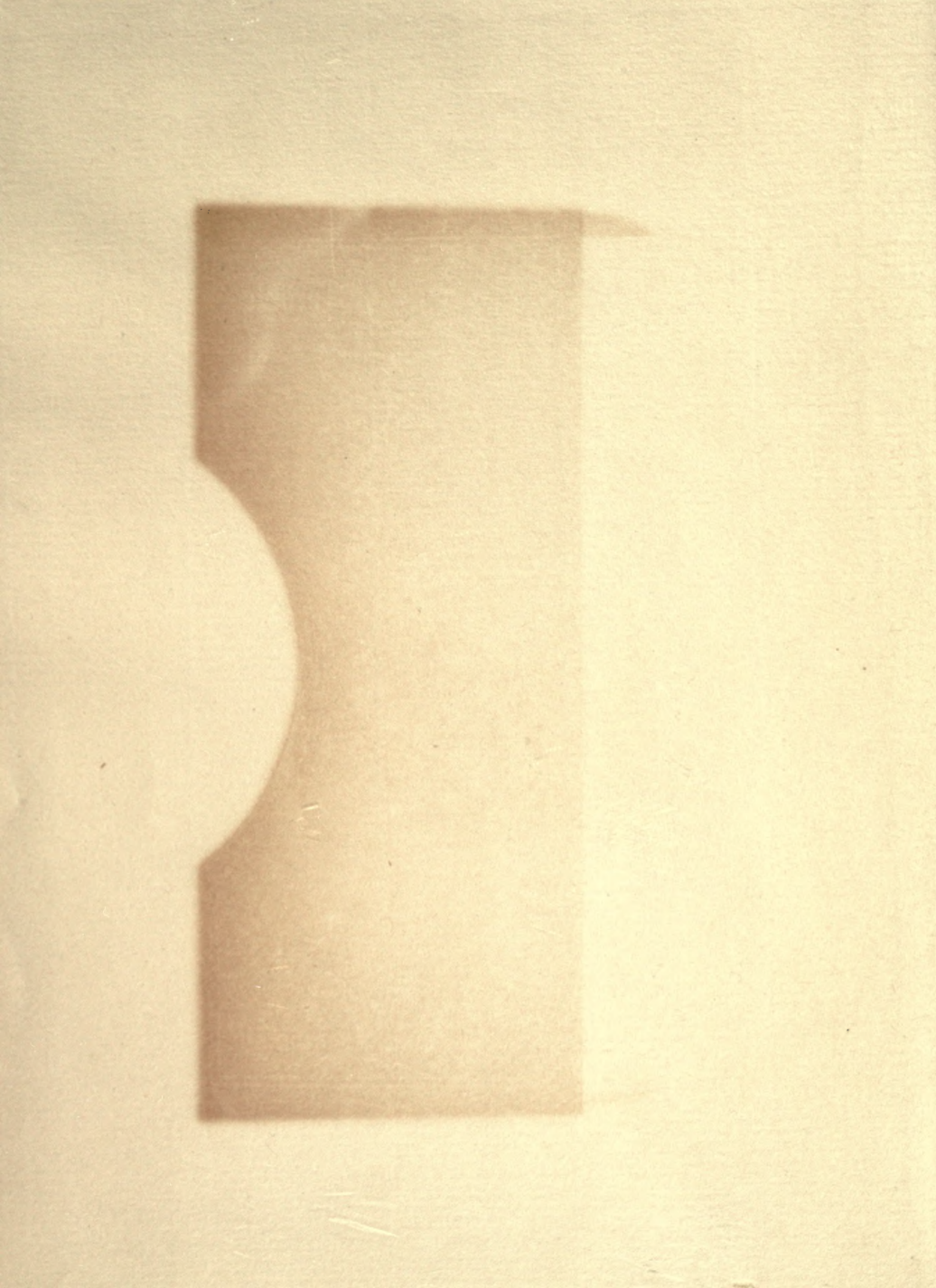
DEFENCE OF VENICE

Or we should shame us to inflict our anguish
Upon our friends. Oh, Venice of my love,
It is for you, it is for you I grieve,
Stricken and bound. City of noble souls,
Great-hearted Venice, none has loved you more
Than I, who leave you in the bitter grip
Of failure and despair.

[Exeunt all.]

THE END





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